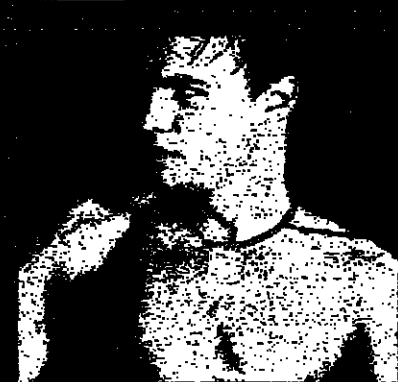


الجمعة ٢٠ أبريل ١٩٩٦



Magazine
The Knack
How to back a winner, write a best-seller and be a success



Weekend
Life after Take That
Giles Smith talks to Gary Barlow, teen sensation (retired)



THE INDEPENDENT

2.966 SATURDAY 20 APRIL 1996 50p (IR 65p)

Abusers' charter goes unchecked

REBECCA FOWLER

Britain's most vulnerable and disturbed children continue to be exposed to sexual and physical abuse in residential care homes, despite a series of damning inquiries over the last decade.

The Government has consistently failed to act on recommendations from the high-level inquiries set up to investigate the scandals. Instead, ministers have allowed a system to continue which still allows paedophiles and abusers to:

- Take up jobs in homes without being fully vetted.
- Escape prosecution after their activities have been discovered.
- Move on to other jobs without their activities being reported.
- Undermine the word of the children who report them.
- Exploit the lack of spot checks and inspections on homes and the widespread reluctance to believe children.
- Exploit the absence of a central regulatory body and code of conduct.

Many child victims of abuse

bear scars which can last a lifetime. Some are not believed when they first complain, others still feel lasting shame and inadequacy and say that they are haunted by the memory of their abusers, who were often the very people they had most trusted. Many take their own lives.

The problems in children's homes have been highlighted this month by the attempt to suppress the publication of a report into abuse in children's homes in Cwyl, North Wales, where at least 100 children may have suffered sexual abuse in the Seventies and Eighties. It was feared that if the report was published it would provide the victims with evidence to sue the council.

At least 12 former residents of the Cwyl homes have died in circumstances related to their experiences. More than 50 staff have been disciplined, but ministers have done nothing to change the law to prevent the same thing happening today.

Allan Levy QC, one of Britain's most distinguished authorities on child abuse, said yesterday: "At first there was so much interest in tackling this



Despite recent scandals, child abusers are still able to flourish in children's homes and ministers are doing little to stop it. **Rebecca Fowler reports**

issue, but it's gone down and down, and now there is a lot of disillusionment. What the Wales experience shows really is that the abusers are still winning."

Mr Levy co-wrote the report into the physical and emotional abuse of more than 150 children in Staffordshire between 1983 and 1989. Children as young as nine were isolated in a bare room, wearing only their night clothes, for up to 84 days

at a time in a policy known as "pin-down". Some in desperation slashed their wrists and took overdoses.

He added: "What has come to light about the abuse in residential care homes, and what horrifies me is that there is no doubt that there are groups of abusers working in these places, and the level of involvement may go from workers right through to police officers."

There are at present an esti-

mated 8,000 children in residential care in England and Wales, costing approximately up to £1,500 a week for each child. Some are in council-run homes, others are in private homes, but abuses have been revealed in both sectors.

Children in a £1,000-a-week private residential home run by a grocer in Kent were subjected to a regime of vicious beatings, and food and sleep deprivation. The owner's son, a

former vacuum-cleaner salesman, would throw children off the furniture.

In Leicestershire Frank Beck, who ran local homes, abused more than 100 children between 1973 and 1986. He exercised his infamous "regression therapy" in which he forced children to wear nappies and was convicted of rape and buggery.

There was also widespread abuse in Islington, north London, where more than 60 children in residential care were thought to have been involved with a paedophile ring involving council staff and abusers from outside.

A number of prominent compensation cases have highlighted the plight of children in care. Two women under Beck's control were awarded £225,000 earlier this month, and 140 people who had been victims of the pin-down policy in Staffordshire received compensation totalling £2m.

But the loopholes that made them vulnerable to abuse in the first place remain. Norman Warner, who led a government inquiry into abuse in 1992 following pin-down, said yesterday

that ministers had failed to act on his call for an independent team to look at how the system should be improved.

Mr Warner said: "We wanted it to be a public watchdog that would ensure change took place. We wanted champions of change, and instead we got a support group without much money which was not allowed to speak out publicly and nothing happened."

Childcare experts and social service directors now believe that urgent action is needed on four fronts to prevent the abuse of children:

- A "general social services council" should be established to act as a professional and disciplinary body for social and care workers - similar to the arrangements for doctors, nurses and lawyers.
- There should be improved inspection and registration of children's homes.
- A central index of individuals convicted of offences against children should be established.
- A programme of improved training should be set up for care workers.

The enduring scandal, page 4

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Secret life of the sad modern father

The Queen at 70



Weekend Shakespeare, The Movie: Kenneth Branagh, Trevor Nunn and Adrian Noble interviewed

Holidays in hell: tourism, terrorism and thrill-seekers

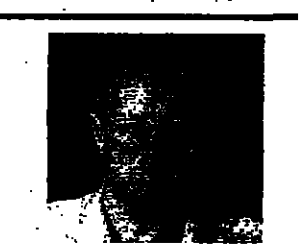
Why we are a nation of tree-huggers

Rockets drown out talk of ceasefire

Both Hizbollah and the Israeli army continued their battle in southern Lebanon yesterday despite American insistence that a ceasefire is imminent in the aftermath of Thursday's Israeli massacre of Lebanese refugees at a United Nations compound.

Scores of Katyusha rockets - 50 in all - were fired into Israel by Hizbollah guerrillas while Israeli jets staged at least nine air raids, half of them south of Tyre. At midday, Israeli missile boats cut the coast road between Beirut and Sidon by firing at civilian traffic on the highway.

The prospects for a Hizbollah-Israeli ceasefire thus remained a good deal less promising in Lebanon than they appeared in the United States and Europe. A statement from staff of the US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, to the effect that both Syria and Lebanon had "agreed" to a ceasefire seems to mean only that both Rafiq Hariri, the Lebanese Prime Minister, and Parouq al-Sharaa, the Syrian Foreign Minister, were working to bring one about - and then



ROBERT FISK Beirut

only a truce of a few days in which further discussions would be held to clarify a long-term agreement.

In Lebanon, this is the sort of schedule that is usually doomed to failure. The US, loyally echoing Israel's demands, is still insisting that the Hizbollah must be disarmed and that the 1993 agreement between the two antagonists - which forbade attacks on Lebanese and Israeli civilians - should be only a basis for discussions.

Mr Hariri has repeatedly stated that as long as Israeli troops continue to occupy part

of southern Lebanon, Lebanese citizens - be they Hizbollah or anyone else - have the right to resist those occupation forces. Why, Mr Hariri asked yesterday, should Hizbollah be disarmed in order to make Israel's occupation more comfortable?

Both Syria and Lebanon are also well aware that Israel's Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, after the Israeli massacre of refugees at Qana, desperately wants to wind up his pre-electoral military adventure in Lebanon - and see no reason why he should be rewarded with a ceasefire brought about by the savagery of his own army's bombardment.

Israel has been further threatened by an anonymous telephone caller claiming to speak for the "Organisation of the Oppressed on Earth" who told the French news agency AFP in Beirut that Ron Arad, the Israeli navigator shot down while bombing Lebanon in 1986, would be "executed" if Israeli forces did not end their hostilities within 48 hours.

Middle East in turmoil, pages 8 and 9

Rugby case changes rules of game



Ben Smoldon after winning damages yesterday for the rugby injury which left him paralysed. He said: 'I hope this case will make the game safer' Photograph: Peter Macdiamid

JOJO MOYES

A young rugby player who was left paralysed when a scrum collapsed yesterday won a landmark High Court action for damages against the match referee. The judgment is likely to have world-wide implications for the game.

Ben Smoldon, 21, now a tetraplegic, was injured while playing hooker in a game between Sutton Coldfield and Burton-on-Trent Colts in October 1991. Claiming £1m compensation, he sued the Burton prop forward Thomas Whitworth, accusing him of collapsing the scrum, and the referee Michael Nolan for not keeping proper control.

Although he considered Mr Whitworth, 22, from Stoke on Trent, to be a short-tempered man who might well have been "hard" in the scrum, Mr Justice Curtis "acquitted" him of any liability in negligence to Mr

What it means for sport: Back Page


Smoldon. But the judge said Mr Nolan, 54, an Army cadet force administrator from Staffordshire, who was backed by the Rugby Football Union, had "failed to exercise reasonable care and skill" in preventing scrum collapses.

Yesterday's decision was followed by an immediate warning that the floodgates could now be open to similar claims. Edward Grayson, president of the British Association for Sport and the Law, said: "The chemistry master who likes picking up the whistle as a hobby has now got to understand the intricacies of the laws of the game, because if he doesn't the

TURN TO PAGE 3

| IN BRIEF | | |
|--|---|--|
| Spy Blake's £90,000 victory George Blake, the Russian spy and Wormwood Scrubs prison escapee, yesterday became the unlikely guardian of free speech for ministers and civil servants when the High Court ruled that he could keep the £90,000 profits from his MI6 memoirs. Page 3 | Rapist challenge The Royal College of Nursing is mounting a challenge to reverse a legal decision allowing a convicted rapist to resume his career as a nurse. Page 6 | Debt to Dini If the centre-left wins tomorrow's Italian elections it will owe a great deal to the outgoing prime minister Lamberto Dini. Page 11 |
| Today's weather Cloudy with rain and light winds in northern and western regions. Warm and sunny after early mist and drizzle in the South-east and Midlands. Page 2 | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| section ONE | BUSINESS 18-21 COMMENT 16,17 CROSSWORD 28 GAZETTE 14 LEADING ARTICLE 16 LETTERS 16 OBITUARIES 14 SHARES 20 SPORT 22-28 UNIT TRUSTS 21 WEATHER 2 | section TWO | ARTS 6-8 BOOKS 9-11 COUNTRY 13 GARDENING 12 LISTINGS 26 MONEY 22-25 MOTORING 21 PROPERTY 20 SHOPPING 4,5 TRAVEL 14-19 TV & RADIO 27,28 |
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The shrug factor:
pornography and the BritishUK 'Pill scare'
data rejected by
EU drug bodyLIZ HUNT
Health Editor

British government advice that women on seven brands of the Pill should swap to other brands because of blood-clot fears has been rejected by the European drug-safety watchdog. The decision has renewed criticism that the warnings, in October 1995, were unnecessary and premature and based on incomplete data.

Scores of unplanned pregnancies and extra abortions have been linked with the Pill scare in October 1995, which affected 1.5 million women – half of all Pill-users – taking some of the most popular brands, known as "third-generation" contraceptives.

The Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) based its advice on three independent studies, unpublished at that point, which suggested that these Pills, containing the synthetic hormones gestodene and desogestrel, were twice as likely to cause blood clots as other brands. The risk, however, was still half that of a woman developing a clot in pregnancy.

Family-planning experts condemned the decision, saying women should be told of the findings but not advised to swap brands unless they fell into a high-risk group for blood clots. Walter Spitzer, a principal investigator of one of the three studies, was so outraged he flew to London from Canada for just three hours to hold

a press conference. He accused the CSM of breaking scientific rules by issuing a warning on the basis of unpublished and unreviewed data.

Now a six-month review of all available data by the Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products (CPMP), a European drug-safety watchdog, has failed to establish any scientific reason to change advice to women taking these Pills in the EU, or recommend a change in the drug-licensing requirements.

This was despite heavy lobbying by British representatives and the German delegation. German scientists were the first to warn about blood-clot problems associated with some of the newer Pills and last year issued advice similar to the British. The CPMP's advice is not binding on the 15 national drug-regulatory authorities but is certainly influential and embarrassing to the British.

After a three-day meeting in London, the CPMP yesterday acknowledged the data indicates that the blood-clot risk of desogestrel or gestodene-containing Pills is higher than other brands but said the impact of "biases and confounding factors" in the studies on the differences could not be fully evaluated.

The clinical relevance of differences in blood-clotting effects of the different Pills was "unknown", the CPMP said, and claims of a protective role against heart attack for the third-generation Pills was as yet

"inconclusive". The committee has requested more analysis of the studies.

Rolf Bass, head of the Human Medicines Evaluation Unit at the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products, confirmed that "for the time being there is no need for further action on these Pills".

Simon Hughes, the Liberal Democrat spokesman on health, who has tabled 150 questions on the Pill scare, yesterday said the CPMP announcement was "the best evidence yet ... that there was no medical need to warn women last autumn to stop taking third-generation oral contraceptives".

A spokesman for Organon, maker of Marvelon and Mircilon, two of the brands, said: "We are pleased with the CPMP's decision that no action is necessary which it reached after six months of careful consideration. The CSM made its decision after six days."

Conspiracy theories have been advanced to explain the Government's decision, including one that it was a plot to remove the most expensive brands of the Pill from NHS prescription. Other sources said it was to distract attention from the fight in the Commons by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, for his political life, on the day of the Pill announcement. The Health Department has denied them.

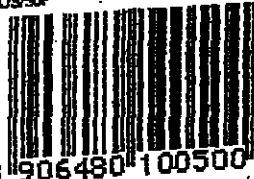
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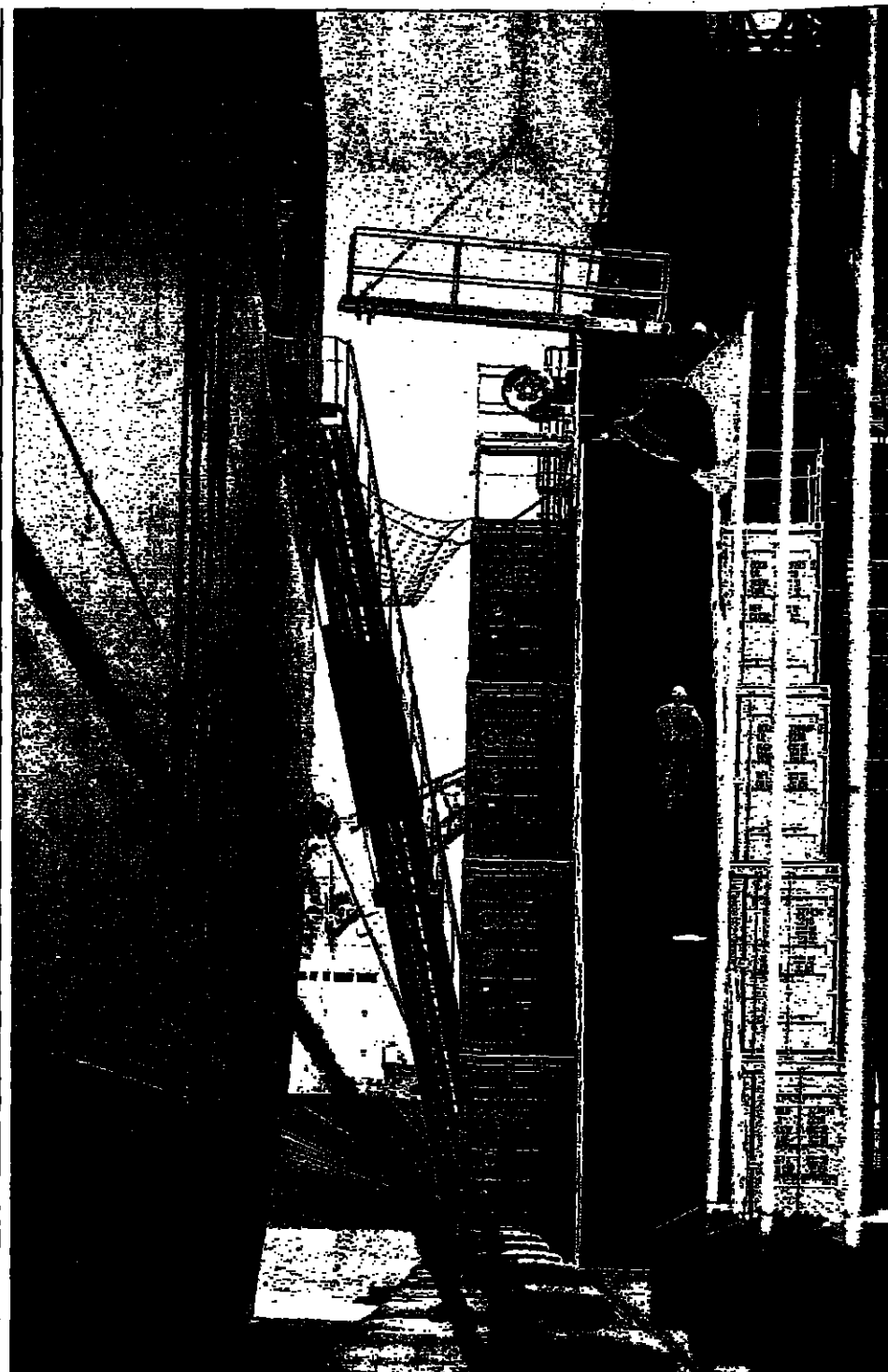
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The shipping news: The 66,000-ton, Japanese-built OOCL Britain, one of the world's largest container ships, at Southampton for its naming ceremony. Photograph: Ashley Coombes

Labour defends benefit 'cuts'

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Labour leaders last night defended plans to remove child benefit from 16- to 18-year-olds after Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security, said the move would "clobber" low-income families.

Mr Lilley said cutting child benefit for 16- to 18-year-olds would rob some families with one child in education of £500 a year and discourage young people from staying in education. "It is not just middle class who will suffer from Labour's plans," Mr Lilley said. "A quarter of 16- to 18-year-olds in education live in families on low-income related benefits."

Left-wing Labour MPs and the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) also expressed concern, but the CPAG welcomed the commitment of the shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown to keep child benefit for those under 16 as a universal payment.

Labour admitted there will be losers, but insisted that the released money would be targeted at lower-income families. A source said: "There will be losers but there will be large numbers of winners as well. We want to focus resources on people for whom the financial case for going into work is too great."

Sources close to Mr Brown, said it was crazy that parents with boys at Eton were able to collect £10.80 a week in child benefit, when it was denied to families whose children had been forced to go out to work.

Ending child benefit for 16- to 18-year-olds would release £700 million for spending on schemes to encourage people to stay on at school or college.

Labour estimate. The Independent has learned that Michael Heseltine, the deputy Prime Minister, has ordered a Government survey of training to be published to answer Labour's election campaign strategy on training and education.

Labour's strategy, outlined by the shadow Chancellor in a John Smith memorial lecture, could release £50m in further education money to encourage more people, particularly from low-income families, to take further education through a combination of targeted grants, loans, and benefits.

IN BRIEF

Landlord is guilty of gas fire killing

A landlord yesterday admitted the manslaughter of a tenant who died of carbon monoxide poisoning from a faulty gas fire. In the first case of its kind, Thomas Beedie, of Cottingham, Hull, pleaded guilty to the manslaughter of Tracy Murphy, 19, who was found dead in her flat in November 1993.

Beedie was fined £1,500 two years ago for failing to maintain the gas fire in Ms Murphy's room. Later an inquest jury found that she had been unlawfully killed. Yesterday Mr Justice Clarke adjourned his case until Monday for sentencing at Sheffield Crown Court.

Stolen beef alert

Police warned shoppers and caterers to beware of buying stolen beef unfit for home consumption. Thieves made off with about 100lb of vacuum-packed joints from a lorry at a frozen-food factory in Glasgow. Police said the meat was chuck roll and only suitable for use in the catering industry.

Sex tourism curb

A proposed crackdown on sex tourism cleared the House of Commons. The Private Bill, aimed at curbing holiday tours to countries such as Thailand for paedophiles to have sex with children, was given an unopposed third reading and now looks likely to become law. It makes it an offence to conspire or incite people to have sex with children abroad punishable by a maximum life sentence.

Ex-husband in dock

The ex-husband of a woman found tied up and drowned in a river was remanded in custody accused of her murder. Philip Skipper, 38, appeared before magistrates at Cardiff charged with murdering Karen Skipper, 34, a divorcee, whose partially clothed body was recovered by police divers from the River Ely in the city on 10 March.

Heart man home

An elderly diabetic will be the first patient in Britain to leave hospital after receiving a permanent mechanical heart. Ralph Lawrence, 65, from Kenilworth, Warwickshire, was fitted with the device on 30 March at the Oxford Heart Centre, and could be home next week. He had his operation five days before the death of Abel Goodman, the first patient to be fitted with the device at Oxford.

Mines blown up

Royal Navy bomb disposal experts blew up six Second World War mines found on a beach. The six devices, 14in round and 9in high, were spotted during an Army exercise at Whitland Bay, east Cornwall. Two kilometres of the beach was cordoned off as the Navy detonated the mines.

Pub boss accused

A pub manager appeared in court accused of stealing money collected in his bar for the Dunblane fund. Patrick Southgate, 45, formerly of the Hope and Anchor in Poplar, east London, was given bail until 3 May. He is charged with stealing £1,500 from the Dunblane fund at the pub on 8 April.

£100m superdome

A new £100m sports, entertainment and convention complex is to be built in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Preparatory work on the 70-acre National Superdome site will start at the end of the month, with completion due in 1998. The Superdome will provide a 65,000 all-seater sports complex with a retractable roof.

The last serenade

The National Lottery presenter Anthea Turner makes her final appearance tonight serenaded by the tenor Jose Carreras singing "Am Juez Con Tu Amor". Ms Turner has signed a £750,000 deal with Carlton Television. The veteran comic Bob Monkhouse takes her leave.

Visiting Luxor

Yesterday we reported that the Foreign Office had advised tourists not to visit Luxor. The Foreign Office advises tourists not to travel by road, rail or river to or through the governorate of Monya, which does not include Luxor.

Watch out, gazumping's about

LOUISE JURY
RAMOLA TALWAR and
DANIEL ROSEMAN

The nightmare on elm street is back. Gazumping, scourge of the Eighties househunter, has returned.

For the past five years the National Association of Estate Agents has barely had a call on the subject. Its compliance department is now getting a handful each week. The heyday of

gazumping – where the buyer demands a last minute price cut or pulls out – may be over.

Hugh Dunsmore-Hardy, the association's chief executive, said it was clear that gazumping was taking place in areas where the recovery was strongest – the Home Counties and the South-east. "During the years of the depression buyers have been letting down sellers, either by demanding reductions or pulling out when some-

thing cheaper comes on to the market. Obviously, the balance is swinging back to the seller."

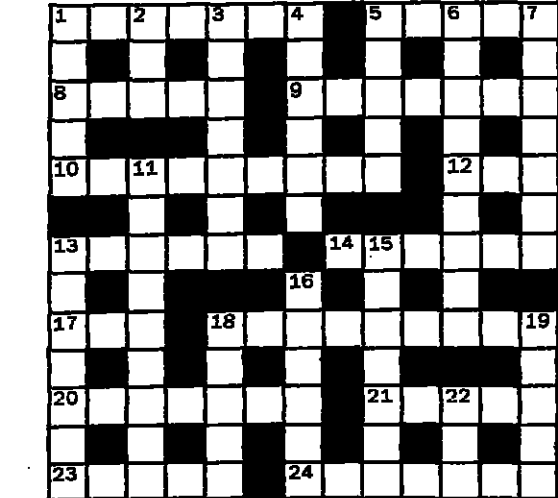
John Morris, joint senior partner at Day Morris and Associates, in Hampstead, north London, said he had had several cases recently – but the vendors had all said no. In one case, a seller turned down a £200,000 increase on a £285,000 price. "It is only when people are offered an incredible amount more that it takes place," he said.

A spokesman for Abbott Manson, in Bristol, said they had had two cases in recent weeks. "It would happen more but we don't let it," he said. "We have even had people putting money through the vendor's door to offer them a higher price."

Chris Stone, manager at Prickett and Ellis, in London, said they tried to be careful because "once gazumping starts it will go all the way through the market".

concise crossword

No.2966 Saturday 20 April



ACROSS

- 1 Keg brochures (7)
- 5 Woody plants (3)
- 8 Planet (5)
- 9 Stupid person (7)
- 10 Slightly odd (9)
- 12 Vegetable (3)
- 13 Tumbler (6)
- 14 Muslim greeting (6)
- 17 Holy woman (3)
- 18 Depiction (9)
- 20 Facelift (7)
- 21 Japanese fish dish (5)
- 23 Drunk (5)
- 24 Dieting unit (7)

DOWN

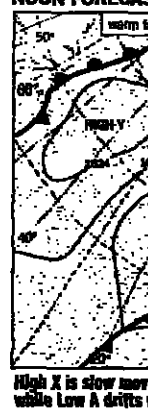
- 1 Topic (5)
- 2 For each (3)
- 3 Intensify (7)
- 4 Excellent (6)
- 5 Close-fitting jacket (5)
- 6 Worthy of imitation (9)
- 7 Holstered weapon (7)
- 11 Prison working-party (5-4)
- 13 Advantage (7)
- 15 Spray (7)
- 16 Gambol (6)
- 18 Variety of grape (5)
- 19 French river (5)
- 22 Knight's title (3)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
Across: 1 Higgs, 4 Pie (1-Spy), 7 Magi, 8 Mousique, 9 Rhine factor, 10 Cam on, 13 Embryo, 15 Sleeping-bag, 19 Cellular, 20 Leak, 21 Set, 22 Ennue, Down: 1 Health, 2 Gainsay, 3 Samox, 4 Paint, 5 Equerry, 6 Estate, 11 Abscess, 12 Napalm, 14 Bobbles, 16 Eclair, 17 Nerve, 18 Grebe.

NOTES

weather

NOON FORECAST



High X is slow moving, Low Z is almost stationary and filling, while Low A drifts northwards and deepens.

WORLD WEATHER

| Area | Temp | Wind | Cloud | Area | Temp | Wind | Cloud |
|---------------|-------|------|--------|---------|-------|------|--------|
| London | 12/15 | SW | Partly | Paris | 13/18 | SW | Partly |
| Birmingham | 12/15 | SW | Partly | Madrid | 14/20 | SW | Partly |
| Manchester | 12/15 | SW | Partly | Rome | 15/21 | SW | Partly |
| Newcastle | 12/15 | SW | Partly | Beijing | 16/22 | SW | Partly |
| Glasgow | 12/15 | SW | Partly | Tokyo | 17/23 | SW | Partly |
| Dun Laoghaire | 12/15 | SW | Partly | Sydney | 18/24 | SW | Partly |

LIGHTING TIMES

| Location | Light | Dark |
|---------------|---------|---------|
| London | 5.06 pm | 8.52 pm |
| Birmingham | 5.10 pm | 8.56 pm |
| Manchester | 5.14 pm | 9.00 pm |
| Newcastle | 5.18 pm | 9.04 pm |
| Glasgow | 5.22 pm | 9.08 pm |
| Dun Laoghaire | 5.26 pm | 9.12 pm |

AIR QUALITY

| Location | Quality |
|---------------|---------|
| London | Good |
| Birmingham | Good |
| Manchester | Good |
| Newcastle | Good |
| Glasgow | Good |
| Dun Laoghaire | Good |

HIGH TIDES

| Location | Time | Height |
|---------------|----------|--------|
| London | 10.00 am | 5.6 m |
| Birmingham | 10.05 am | 5.7 m |
| Manchester | 10.10 am | 5.8 m |
| Newcastle | 10.15 am | 5.9 m |
| Glasgow | 10.20 am | 6.0 m |
| Dun Laoghaire | 10.25 am | 6.1 m |

Out and about with AA Roadwatch

Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news.

Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 20p per min unless stated otherwise.

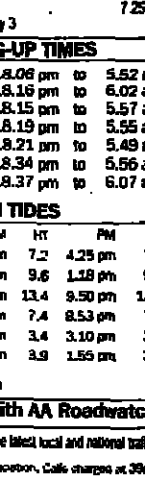
TODAY'S FORECAST

Northern and eastern Scotland will get some sun, but rain to the south will spread north. The North Sea, meanwhile, will be bright and breezy with showers. N. Ireland, Wales and northern and western parts of England will be cloudy with some rain, but generally light winds. Southeast England and the Midlands will get some warm sunny spells after early rain and drizzle.

OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS

Heavy showers or spells of rain with some sun on Monday and Tuesday will see a mix of sun and showers, and it will also turn cooler with a gusty westerly wind. Many of the showers should die out through the middle of the week, but sun- and rain-free spells will persist.

Independent Weatherline



All calls charged at 20p per min unless stated otherwise. Source: The Met Office.

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Blake to keep £50,000 profits from spy book

HEATHER MILLS
Home Affairs Correspondent

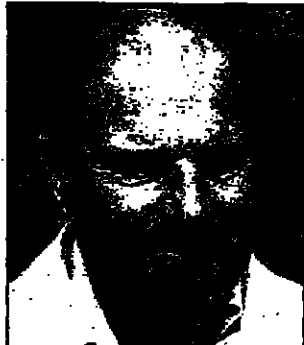
George Blake - Russian spy and prison escapee - yesterday became the unlikely guardian of the free speech of ministers and civil servants when the High Court ruled he could keep the £90,000 profits from his M16 memoirs.

And Blake, who escaped from Wormwood Scrubs prison in 1966 and has lived in Moscow ever since, had not even bothered to contest the Government's attempt to get its hands on his money.

His victory came because the High Court appointed an independent adviser on the law because of the huge civil liberties implications of the case. So Lord Lester, the leading constitutional QC and a veteran of the controversial M15 spy-catcher court battles, ended up arguing a better case for Blake than he could have dreamed.

Last night ministers, who had hoped the ruling would gag all former secret and security service staff, bitterly condemned the ruling by Sir Richard Scott - another spy-catcher veteran - and more notably, the man who headed the anti-Iraq inquiry.

Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, said the public would be "bemused" by the ruling in favour of Blake, whose treachery after being captured in Korea in the 1950s



Blake: Russian spy turned guardian of free speech

led to the deaths of a number of British agents.

"He was a convicted traitor. He sent people to their deaths who were acting on behalf of Britain's interests and he makes a profit out of it. The Government acts to try to ensure that that gain doesn't flow through and in our own courts we get reversed," he said.

But the ruling the Government was seeking would have prevented any minister or civil servant from publishing autobiographies without government approval.

The Government was not seeking to argue that in his apology, *No Other Choice*, Blake had breached confidentiality, given away official secrets, or endangered national interests - he had after all given all the damaging information to the Russians decades ago: it

was seeking to argue he broken a lifelong duty of trust.

Yesterday Sir Richard said such an argument was "too wide to be acceptable" and would interfere with his rights of free speech. "A duty to refrain from disclosing information that is neither secret nor confidential is not necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security," said Sir Richard. "The Crown have not, in my judgement, either pleaded or established by evidence any misuse by the defendant of his position as a former member of the SIS or of information imparted to him."

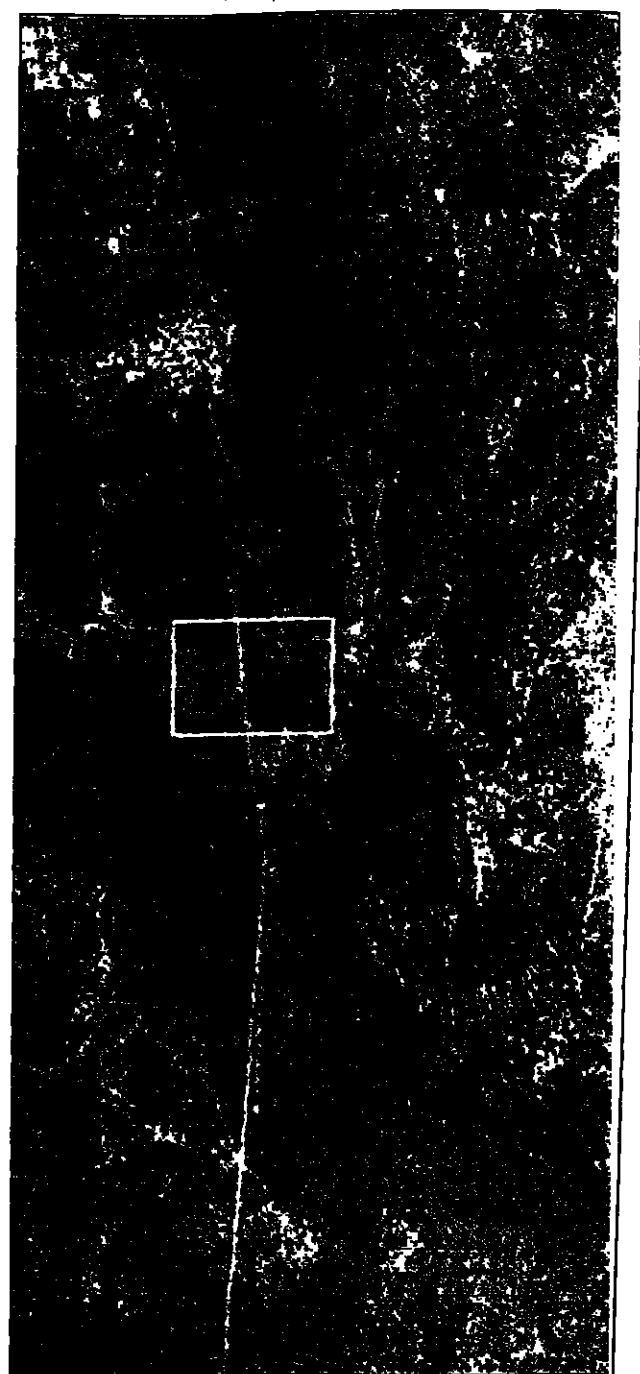
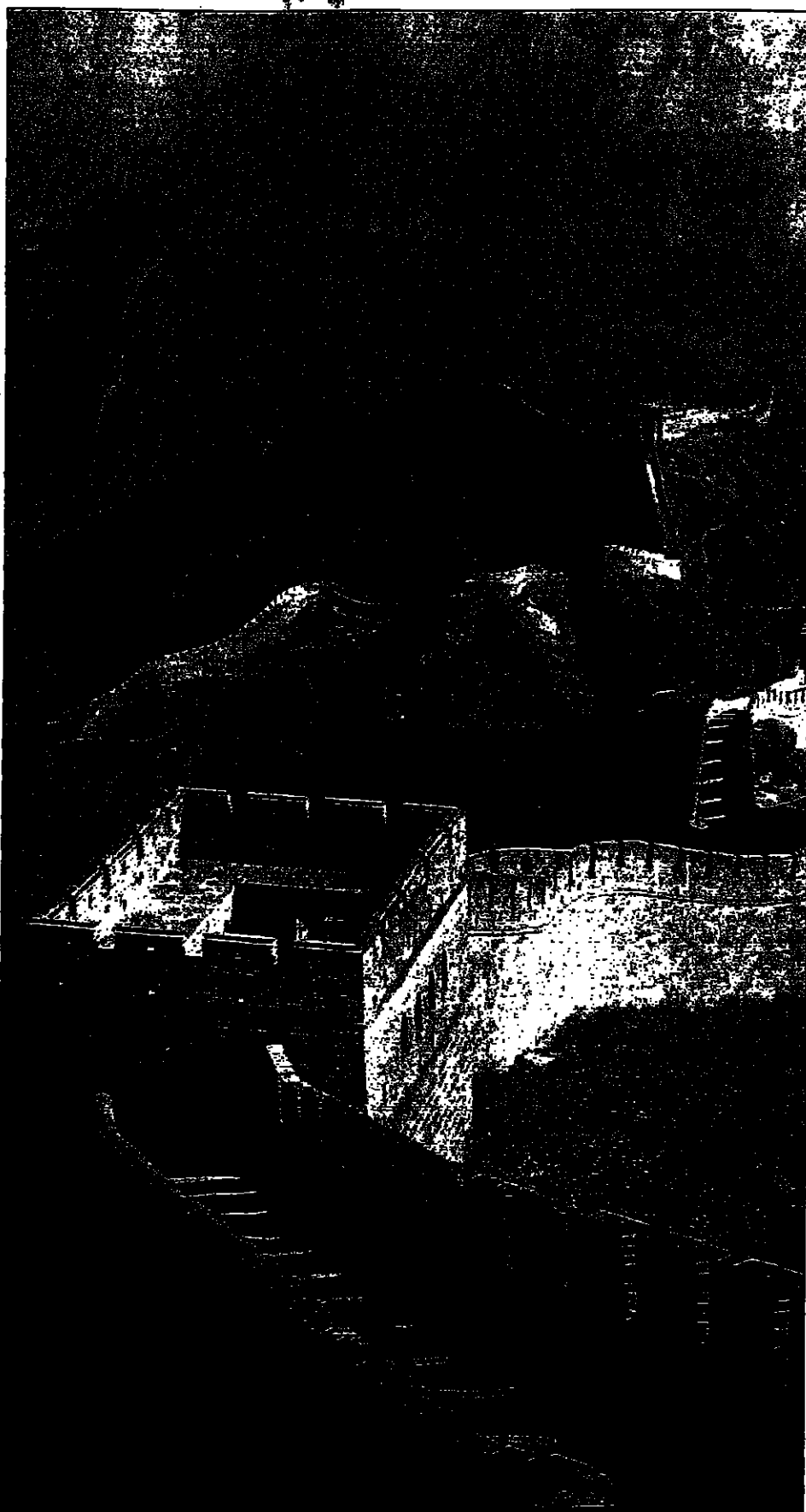
"This last conclusion may seem strange in view of the defendant's status as a self-confessed traitor."

"The conclusion is, however, a consequence of the Crown's attempt to establish a case on what was far too broad a statement of the duty owed by members of intelligence and security agencies..."

Blake, now 73, will end up with about £50,000. Jonathan Cape, the publishers, are withholding the rest to cover legal fees and the cost of publishing about 2,000 copies, in the light of legal action.

Blake was not in his Moscow flat yesterday for comment, but he will have been pleasantly surprised by the ruling. He had earlier told reporters he had written off the money and didn't care anymore about the book.

Space radar reveals secrets of Great Walls



China's Great Wall: Left, man's largest single construction. Above, colour photo from space a below, space radar image showing the two generations

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

Scientists in China are using radar images taken from space to study parts of the Great Wall of China which have been eroded and buried by centuries of windblown sand.

The pictures can identify different versions of the wall - one of the few manmade structures visible with the naked eye from space. It was first built in the third century BC, to protect the country from northern invaders.

"In the images, we can recognise two different dynasties that built the Great Wall," said Dr Guo Huadong, of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Peking. "One was built in the Ming dynasty and is about 600 years old. The other was built during the Sui dynasty and is more than 1,000 years old."

The colour picture (top right) shows a 45-mile segment of the wall, which in total is more than 1,860 miles long. This piece lies about 430 miles west of Peking, in a remote part of the north-central China desert, and is visible running from top to bottom as a continuous line.

The radar images are black and white, each showing a section two miles long. The one illustrated here shows the two generations of construction: the bright line on the left is the present-day wall, while just to its right is a discontinuous line - the part built during the Sui dynasty (which lasted from 589-618), which has been intermittently buried by sand dunes blown by winds.

"In this region the wall was made out of loose soil and mud, not bricks and rocks," Dr Huadong said. "Usually you cannot find these segments even if you go there, so the radar data are helping to show us the whole wall."

The different generations of the wall are easy to detect by radar from space, because the steep, smooth sides - between 15 and 25 feet high in its present form - provide a prominent surface which reflects the radar beam.

The radar, called the "synthetic aperture radar", was carried on the Space Shuttle and took these pictures earlier this year.

"Archaeology wasn't one of our original science objectives but the imaging radar data have been found to be very useful in this type of research," said Diane Evans, a project scientist at the United States space agency, NASA.

The radar system is now being used for archaeological investigations in areas which include Angkor in Cambodia, the City of Ubar, in Oman, and the Silk Road along the north-western desert of China.

Tories score an own goal with 'good news' tabloid

COLIN BROWN
Political Correspondent

Conservative Party attempts to promote the "good news" about the Government's record backfired yesterday when a businessman featured in a party paper said he was likely to vote Labour at the next election.

Look! - the Tory tabloid launched by Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, said a Swindon firm, Boxes and Packaging, was typical of the small companies taking advantage of "Britain's enterprise friendly economy and the Conservative Government's staunch resistance to placing a burden on business."

It said Shearer, Sellers, the boss of the firm, "strongly opposes" Labour policies which would "let politicians and

unions meddle in the management of firms."

But yesterday Mr Shearer said he was impressed by Tony Blair and was thinking of voting Labour. "On their current record and on their achievements, I certainly couldn't vote Conservative. They don't deserve it," he added.

John Prescott, deputy leader of the Labour Party, said it showed that Dr Mawhinney was becoming as "gaffe prone" as his predecessor, Jeremy Hunt, and should be moved in the next Cabinet reshuffle. "Mr Mawhinney is a 24-hour-a-day disaster area," he said.

Conservative Central Office retorted: "It was never our intention that Look! would be full of articles about fully paid up members of the Conservative Party. If this is all John Prescott

can complain about, it is really pretty feeble."

Meanwhile, as the Conservatives tried to avoid a wipe-out in the local elections, Lord McAlpine, the former party treasurer, said yesterday that the Tories were heading for a stampeded cattle for general election defeat. Lord McAlpine, a Thatcherite who has been critical of John Major's leadership in the past, said the party was heading for self-destruction after the defeat in the Staffordshire South East by-election.

"It's like watching a Western when you have these herds of cattle, and you have a flash of lightning. The cattle get edgy, and then someone drops a frying pan and the whole lot stampede off in a thousand different directions," he said in a BBC radio interview.

Robots groomed for cutting role in delicate surgery

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

A British team of surgeons and engineers has developed robots for prostate and knee surgery which they say work "as well as the best surgeon on his best day, every day". But one of the key developers of the new systems yesterday criticised government changes which have made it almost impossible to get public funding for the ground-breaking work.

All of the project's early work had to be funded by medical charities because "we fell between the many stools" of science funding, said Dr Brian Davies, of Imperial College's mechatronics in medicine group, who helped develop the system. The Medical Research Council said it involved "too much engineering to qualify for a grant, which is why we were rejected because there was 'no novel scientific principle'."

The first of the systems, dubbed "Probot", has now been used at Guy's Hospital in London for prostate surgery on 12 patients in the past four months. The surgery is a two-stage process. First, the pieces of prostate requiring removal are identified by the surgeons, using an ultrasound probe inserted up the penis. These points are recorded by a computer attached to the robot.

Next, a heated roller like a tiny ballpoint pen is inserted, using a robot arm connected to the computer. The tissue is removed as the computer moves the robot arm and activates the heating element as required. The

process takes about 15 minutes.

The second system, called Acrobot - for "active constrained robot" - will be used on knees in which the knee ends of bones of the thigh and lower leg have degenerated due to arthritis or sports injuries. These ends are usually replaced with metal implants. At present, the surgeon uses a cutter to trim the bone ends. The Acrobot will hold the cutter, which will be controlled by the doctor, but it will be programmed to allow movement only within a predefined space. This will prevent the cutter moving into areas where it might damage soft tissue such as ligaments and tendons.

However, Dr Davies said that getting funding had been a significant problem for the project, which began in 1989. Appeals to the Physical Sciences Research Council, Medical Research Council, and National Institute for Research in Dementia and the Royal Society were all rejected.

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Rugby in chaos over scrum injury verdict

FROM PAGE ONE

consequences could be horrendous."

In his judgement, Mr Justice Curtis said that Mr Nolan had not given "sufficient instruction to the front row and in the use of the 'trough, touch, pause and engage' rule thereby reducing the impact of the engagement to an acceptable level."

The court heard that there were at least 20 scrum collapses in the match, caused mainly by the scrums coming together too hard and fast. The normal figure was around six.

A touch judge had warned the referee that someone in the front row of the scrum would be hurt if he did not take action. Mr Nolan claimed that he did not see any deliberate unlawful behaviour in the collapsed scrum which caused Ben's injury.

Mr Justice Curtis said the danger of collapsed scrums was well known in the game and considerable steps had been taken to reduce the dangers. He stressed that his decisions were based on the fact that the match involved elite teams - where younger bodies were more susceptible to injury - and upon the laws governing that level in the 1991-92 season. Nothing he said applied to senior, international or club rugby played under different laws.

The judge rejected the argument that the law should not interfere in a hard contact sport because it would lead to defensive refereeing. "No responsible player and no responsible referee has anything to fear," he said.

After the judgement, Mr Smoldon said: "I do not want to discourage any player from

playing the game of rugby, but I hope this case is one step to making the game safer." He would continue to support the game of rugby.

His solicitor, Terry Lee, said: "It's a very, very important judgment...The legal implications will be with us for a long time to come."

The case was the first of its kind against a referee, and Col-



Michael Nolan: 'Failed to exercise reasonable care'

to pay Mr Whitworth's costs after he had received damages. Afterwards, Mr Whitworth said: "Whilst I am relieved that this case is over for me, I remain very aware of the severity of Ben Smoldon's injuries and I wish him well."

Mr Nolan, who is understood to be insured, was said to be "deeply disappointed" and considering an appeal. No formal complaint has been made against him and he is still refereeing.

Extensive efforts have been made by the Rugby Football Union to make the game safer at junior level, up to and including under-19s. No player aged 16 and below is allowed to play against any team in which there are adult players - those aged 19 or over.

At scrums, no player is permitted to have his shoulders lower than his hip joint at scrums, mauls and rucks. If guilty of this the referee must immediately penalise the offender.

In the event of one front row being stronger than the other, referees should instruct the more powerful side to reduce their shove sufficiently to ensure the opposing front row stays on their feet.

In junior rugby no scrum may be pushed further than 1.5m and the referee can order non-contested scrums to take place at any time during a game if, for example, one side has lost a front row player and does not have a specialist to replace him.

All sides from full England level to juniors must have a replacement prop and hooker on the sidelines.

Crisis for rugby, Page 28

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news

The young at risk: Litany of failure puts countless boys and girls through nightmares at the hands of people placed in trust

Terrible legacy that haunts so many children

REBECCA FOWLER

When Frank Beck resigned after 13 years of running children's homes in Staffordshire decade ago, he wanted a reference to apply for a post with social-work agency. The local social services wrote enthusiastically that he was "above questioning."

It emerged five years later that Beck had led a reign of abuse from 1973 to 1986 at three children's homes in the county. The man who was above questioning was a vicious paedophile who had sexually, emotionally and physically abused more than 100 children in his care.

No case could better sum up the failings of social services for the care of children who cannot be with their own families. Although Beck was eventually given five life sentences in 1991, and in prison of a heart attack in 1994, he has left a legacy in the recurring nightmares of the children he abused and the loopholes that remain in the system.

Despite the fact that children reported Beck and he was interviewed four times by police in the Seventies and Eighties over abuse allegations, he was spared each time. The police, according to the subsequent inquiry, were not predisposed to believe the children.

But no formal system was ever set up to address complaints against Beck, who used his infamous regression therapy on his charges who were forced to wear nappies, and was convicted of rape and buggery.

The absence of a central regulatory body meant there was no one to appeal to outside the authority. The lack of interest was summed up by one social worker in the report who said: "I have no kids to place and here was someone who would take them without asking too many questions. I dare not upset him."

The great betrayal

to believe that the Beck scandal could never happen in their homes. But across Britain abuse has been exposed in care homes. Among the greatest concerns has been the suspicion that paedophile groups were operating in homes. More than 60 children were thought to have been involved in a ring involving council staff and external abusers in Islington, north London.

In the inquiry that followed last year by Ian White, Oxfordshire's director of social services, he warned that Islington's failure to deal with a further set of allegations in the early Nineties meant staff who may have abused children could be working in child-care elsewhere in the country.

The report put local councillors in the dock as well as employees. It said managers were too terrified to deal with staff in a fiercely politically correct regime for fear of being called homophobic or racist.

The revelations of abuse in Staffordshire of more than 140 children in the Eighties were equally damning. Tony Latham,

a social worker, was the architect of the policy known as "pin-down" for controlling difficult children in homes.

They were kept in isolation for weeks at a time in a bare room; many were forced to breaking point where they attempted suicide. But Barry O'Neill, the then director of social services, said of Latham, the policy was "to let him get on with it and not to interfere as long as he produced the goods".

When he was finally exposed, an inquiry launched in 1991 concluded he had lost sight of "minimum standards of behaviour and professional practice".

But perhaps the most disturbing scandal is that of Clwyd, North Wales, in the Seventies and Eighties, where more than 100 children may have suffered sexual abuse in homes.

The attempts to suppress the report into what took place has provoked concern about how deep the corruption went. There have been calls for a public investigation of claims that social workers procured boys for people outside the homes and used the boys themselves for sex.

The most enduring legacy of the scandals must be the revelation that 12 former residents of homes in North Wales are dead, in circumstances that have been linked to their time in care.



Bitter memories: Demetrios Pantou, who seeks compensation Photograph: Geraint Lewis

'It was either physical or sexual abuse'

REBECCA FOWLER

The only memory Demetrios Pantou has of being taken into care 18 years ago, when he was 10 years old, is the small black suitcase he had been given for his belongings. His father had explained to him he was unable to care for him after his step mother left.

Throughout his early years he had been threatened with "going to the home", and now his worst fear had come true. But the staff, when he arrived at the institution in north London, were friendly and welcoming.

Mr Pantou, 28, said: "In a way, to begin with, it was better than living at home. I completely trusted them."

However, within eight months of arriving at the home Mr Pantou claims he became the victim of sexual abuse at the hands of the most senior worker there. He is the first alleged victim of abuse in Islington who is pursuing compensation.

Mr Pantou said: "What makes me really angry is that the people I was asking for help from have all gone on to better jobs. Who's watching over the social workers, who's inspecting the inspectors?"

At first the man who he claims abused him showed him great friendship according to Mr Pantou, and bought him presents. Mr Pantou says he was confused by his displays of affection.

Mr Pantou said: "He

became the most important person in my life and I completely trusted him. He bought me presents including a digital watch. Then I became very scared of him. He began coming into my bed three or four nights a week. You knew you had no choice. It was either sexual abuse or physical abuse."

When Mr Pantou finally reported the man, shortly before his eleventh birthday, he says he was told by a female worker not to worry because he was leaving in six weeks time anyway. He left earlier following a police inquiry.

For 13 months Mr Pantou said he enjoyed relative peace and social workers noted in his reports that he was more contented than he had been. However, a young male worker joined the home and started to abuse him. "It was very much a question of here we go again."

The alleged abuse continued from December 1980 to June 1981 when Mr Pantou, then 13, told the head of the home, but he claims he was not believed. He then says he was exposed to a traumatic internal examination by the police, and told to walk home afterwards on his own. Mr Pantou was sent to a further six homes. He struggled alone with the memories of what had happened.

Now he says he wants compensation for the authority who he says never apologised.

Disciplinary body and code of ethics urged for care workers

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

Action on four fronts is needed to prevent the abuse of children, according to child care experts and social services directors.

They say that a General Social Services Council is needed to act as a professional and disciplinary body for social and care workers. Improved in-

THE WAY FORWARD

spection and registration of children's homes is needed. A central index should be created of individuals convicted of offences against children. And improved training should be introduced for care workers, a requirement which could go hand in hand with the creation of a social services council.

Robin Sequeria, immediate

past president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, said: "The issue of who should and should not be working in these sensitive occupations can only ever properly be solved by the establishment of a General Social Services Council. Nothing short of that is going to be effective, because anything else is a voluntary arrangement. It needs to be statutory, with clear regulation

and uniform national standards. If it can be done for lawyers and doctors, it can be done for social services."

The Government has been considering introducing a code of ethics and standards and has papers from the National Institute of Social Work proposing a general council, along with an assessment of how one might be created by the management consultants Price Waterhouse.

Mr Sequeria, however, said there had been only "a deafening silence" from ministers on the issue. Voluntary action would not in the end work, he said, because "the issue is as much about who you register into the system as about who you register out".

Inspection is clearly still not working properly, according to Allan Levy, QC, who wrote the Staffordshire pindown inquiry in

1991, with the Government favouring de-regulation.

And while the Department of Health maintains an index of those considered unsuitable to work with children, social services directors say it has many failings. Local authorities act inconsistently in placing names on it; some do not do so for fear of legal action where child abuse cannot be proved and the department does not circulate

the names. Improved training and possibly improved pay is also needed. Even qualified residential care workers typically receive only between £15,000 and £16,000 a year, according to Brian Waller, Leicestershire's director of social services, but he says "we're still putting unqualified people to work in children's homes with some of the most difficult people in the community".



Charles Dickens

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And now, for your viewing pleasure.

Fifty six people were executed last year in the USA and at the start of 1996 there were more than three thousand people on death row. The USA is just one of many nations which retain the death penalty and the electric chair is merely one way of carrying it out (others include the gas chamber, lethal injection, hanging, firing squad, beheading and stoning to death). Now some US broadcasters want executions to be screened on live TV. What would such a show be like? What issues would it raise?



Amnesty International: working worldwide for the release of prisoners of conscience, fair trials for political prisoners and an end to torture, extra-judicial executions, "disappearances" and the death penalty.



JOHN SPINKELINK, Executed in Florida, May 25 1981
"Spinkelink you're gonna fry, maggot! And them bleeding hearts can't do a thing to save you. Get used to this sound, think of yourself convulsing." See footnote 1



JAMES TERRY ROACH, Executed, January 1986 in South Carolina, regardless of the trial judge having found him to be mentally retarded and despite restrictions guarding against executing people who are not mentally competent.

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 Radio broadcast, Miami, on May 13 1981, before the execution of John Spinkelink
- 2 Fill in the name of any of the twenty-seven US states that retain the death penalty
- 3 William Vanderer in Indiana, October 16, 1983
- 4 Willie Francis in Louisiana, electrocuted on May 2, 1946 and May 8, 1947
- 5 From the 1979 trial of Benjamin Brewer, sentenced to death for the murder of Karen Stapleton
- 6 Quoted from John Graham's 'The Chamber'
- 7 Major Kendall Cooley, in charge of Louisiana's death row. Quoted in 'Dead Man Walking' p150
- 8 Philip Atkin heard the cry of Jerry White the day before his own execution, Florida, 3 and 4 December 1993
- 9 Nabeela Inayat in Georgia, 6 and 7 April 1985
- 10 Source: 'On the Front Line' Live Enforcement News on the Death Penalty
- 11 Albert Camus, 'Rebellion'
- 12 The Golden Bough, Sir J.G. Frazer
- 13 Justice William P. Brennan in 'Globe & Mail', 4/11/85, 10/50 1985, pp 116-66-108

'It's about 10 minutes after 6 at the big age with the grease-man ready to begin the beguine, another action-packed day! Actually I feel pretty perky because I got some great news yesterday! They're gonna electrocute them guys! Ain't that wonderful? In just over 24 hours, Spinkelink you're gonna fry, maggot! You're gonna fry! And them bleeding hearts can't do a thing to save you. Get used to this sound, Spinkelink, think of yourself convulsing.'

Dawn outside the gates of () State Penitentiary. Four police cars are pulled up beside a group whose candle flames fight a losing battle with the dawn. These are the anti-death penalty people: members of the prisoner's family, two elderly nuns, some members of Amnesty International.

A TV crew is filming a local radio DJ rock-'n'-rolling with delight. He is applauded by a small group of pro-death penalty people. A little way off stand a middle aged man and woman dressed in black: the parents of the young girl whose murder the State will avenge tonight.

From inside a cell on death row, the prisoner is watching the last dawn of his life.

If you've seen *Dead Man Walking* you'll know this scene. Like that film, the account you are reading now is fiction, but based on real cases.

"Euthanasia by electricity".

Commercial break, show resumes. The thoughts of everyone outside the prison are focused on one thing. Watching the TV coverage, so are ours.

Grieving, gleeful, or merely gawping, we're all picturing a stark chamber, empty save for the spotlight chair that sits like a throne in the centre.

In our mind's eye a prisoner - seven times out of ten he'll be black - is led in by warders.

Unless we regularly watch *The Live Death Show* (and with over 50 executions last year we had lots of opportunity) there are details we can't imagine - that the man's head is gleaming like a prizefighter's because it has been shaved to accept an electrode.

Surprised? The idea is to provide better electrical contact. Ohm's Law applies. In case you've forgotten it, it states that when current encounters resistance, heat is generated. In some cases, lots of heat. Hence the second reason for shaving the prisoner's head: to prevent his hair catching fire.

When it was new, in 1890, the electric chair was described by the *New York Times* as 'euthanasia by electricity', designed for 'instantaneous and painless death'. But you can't always trust technology, not even the high science of the late 19th century.

Barbecued alive.

The electric chair has been known to take 17 minutes to kill a man and it's certainly not painless.³ Witnesses at the execution of Jesse Tafero in Florida six years ago were appalled to see six inch flames shoot from the hood that covered his head.

During the execution of John Louis Evans by the State of Alabama in 1983, the electrode attached to his ankle burned through and fell off. Sometimes as many as five jolts are needed to kill the prisoner. One man who survived several jolts was taken out of the chair alive. He was successfully electrocuted by the same team a year later.⁴

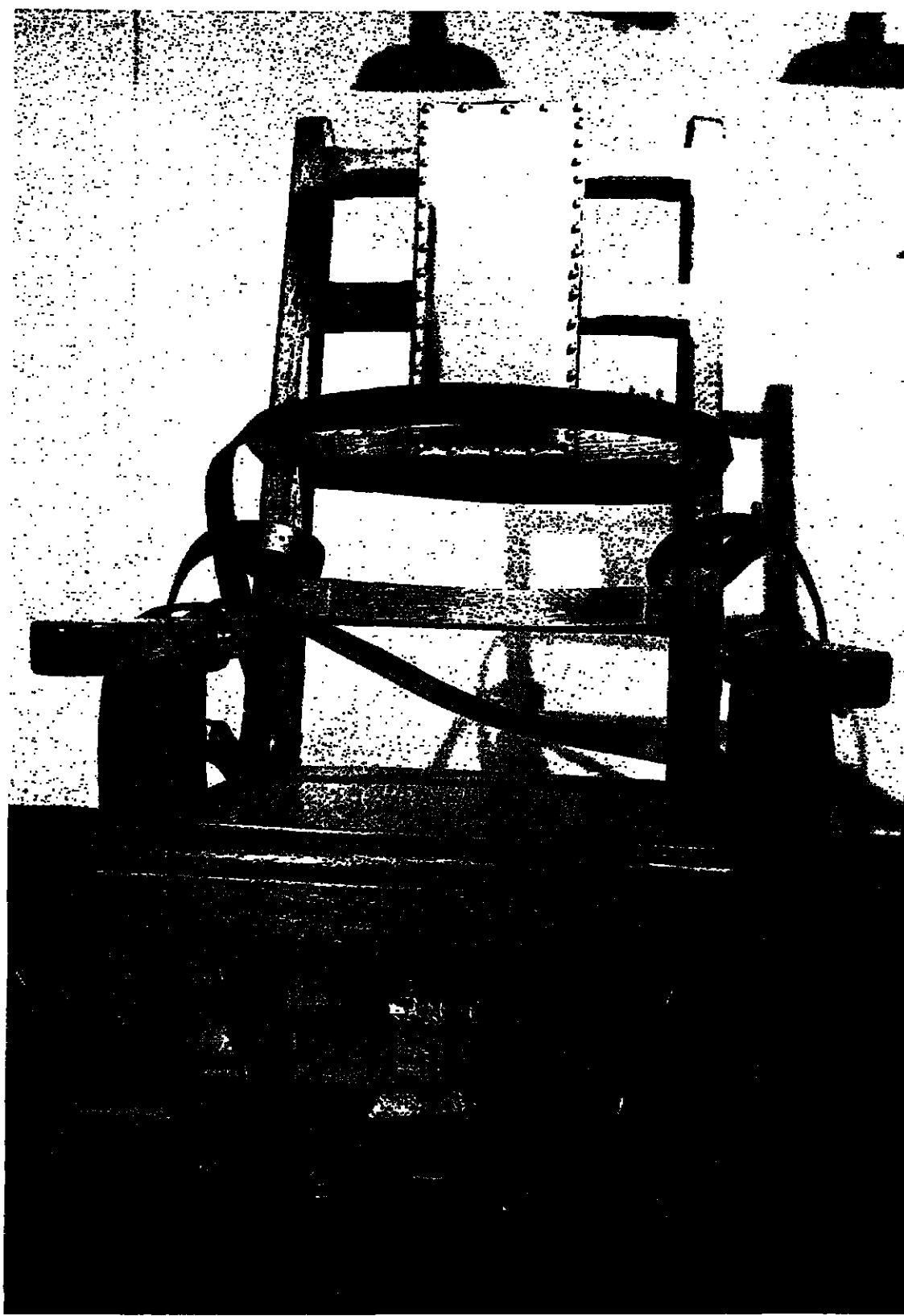
The electric chair is only one of the execution methods used in the USA and around the world. The gas chamber, lethal injection and firing squad are others. Each has its own stories of horror.

What about the victims?

On the TV they're discussing the prisoner's crime. We see a picture of his victim - a smiling, happy young woman. Cut to her parents, crushed by the awful act that ruined their lives. What's it like to have a daughter murdered?

Impossible to imagine, as two tired middle-aged faces look at us across a gulf of tears. Anger long ago turned to numbness, they say they've come to see justice. They hope that when the man who killed their child is dead, their nightmares will stop.

It is we who feel anger. Outraged by what the murderer did. How can you not be angry when you learn the killer said that after stabbing the girl 23 times and cutting her jugular he 'sat on the couch and listened to her gurgle for a while'?



Some one is yelling "The death penalty is too good for these people. They know they're about to die so they have time to say their prayers and say goodbye. What about the victims? How much time did they have to prepare?"⁶

When you're there, you feel dirty.

The question is hurled at those who oppose the death penalty. Amnesty International among them. We hold passionately that killing is always wrong, no matter what the provocation.

However angry we feel, the act of killing isn't natural to us. Not even the killing of a killer. He looks back at us with human eyes. A human being is a human being, not the sum total of one evil action.

Maybe this is why the execution ritual must first dehumanise the condemned man. There is a whole protocol of humiliation which includes shaving his head and dressing him in oversize nappies because he will soil himself. When you know how horrific it is to kill someone, you cannot be cool about it.

Maybe this is why the prison authorities argued to keep the TV cameras out. The executioners say that everything they do, even the grotesque ritual, is humanely motivated, but in their hearts they feel dirty. They know they're killing a man who can't defend himself and it's just as wrong as what he did.

"I get home from an execution about two-something in the morning and I just sit up in a chair for the rest of the night. I can't shake it. I can't square it with my conscience, putting them to death like that."

Deterrent, what deterrent?

One of the points made by Helen Prejean in *Dead Man Walking* is the cruelty of the system that keeps a man on tenterhooks until the last second of his life.

The man due to die may already have served the equivalent of a life sentence. He knows the exact day and time he will die. He's had years to think about the moment. He may have heard others die, screaming in pain.⁷ In his imagination, he has died 100 times already.

One prisoner went to the chair. He had composed himself to die. At the last minute a phone call brought a stay of execution. He was led back to his cell, hope cruelly rekindled. But next day he was stripped, re-diapered and led again to the chair. This time, no phone call.

openly negligent. During one trial which ended with the defendant going to the chair, the defence was drunk. Another defence attorney kept falling asleep. Texas trial judge Doug Shaver said: "The Constitution says everyone's entitled to the attorney of their choice. The Constitution doesn't say the lawyer has to be awake."

What if he's innocent? You can think instantly of half a dozen cases where innocent people were found guilty. If we kill an innocent man, what shall we say to his family? What actually does the death penalty achieve? At the long day's end, it's just one more death. And now the long day is nearly over.

The eleventh minute of the eleventh hour.

You're tired. Executions mostly take place at midnight, so depending whether this is Florida, Texas or Utah, you may have stayed up all night for this moment. A man enters the death chamber. Not the prisoner: an electrician come to check the chair.

Amnesty International asks the State Governor to exercise mercy. Some who end up on death row are educationally subnormal. Many suffered abuse as children. Some have very young mental ages, are mentally disturbed or ill. Because we try to stop executions, we're sometimes accused of excusing the prisoner's crime. We don't condone killing. Exactly the opposite. Our message is simple: whatever the provocation, do not kill. *Never kill.*

Every day, we deal with horrific cases. Around the world each year tens of thousands of people are brutally tortured and murdered by governments. We campaign for the murderers to be brought to justice, but not killed. What good is one more death? One more falling leaf in a blizzard of lost lives.

In a world tortured by violence, let us hold on to our humanity.

"Sometimes the prisoner catches fire."

Now the arguments are done, the moment is at hand. Right or wrong? You, sitting in your armchair are the final judge. Are you sitting comfortably?

A man is led in and made to sit in the throne-like chair. Before they hood him, they set on his skull a circlet of electrodes, like a crown.

In remote Babylon they used to dress condemned criminals up as kings then sacrifice them.¹² Maybe that is what this is really all about: a human sacrifice. A blood offering to purge the violence and hatred that live inside each one of us. Let's remember that compassion and nobility also live inside each one of us, because, in the end, this isn't about the person who is due to die. It's about you and me.

What happens next is quoted from the legal opinion of a Judge.

"The hands turn red, then white, and the cords of the neck stand out like steel bands. The prisoner's limbs, fingers, toes and face are severely contorted. The force of the electric current is so powerful that the prisoner's eyeballs sometimes pop out on his cheeks. The prisoner often defecates, urinates and vomits blood and drool. Sometimes the prisoner catches fire. There is a sound like bacon frying and the sickly sweet smell of burning flesh. When the post-electrocution autopsy is performed the liver is so hot that doctors said it cannot be touched by the human hand. The body is frequently badly burned."¹³

Maybe they should televise a few executions. It will be the quickest way to stop them.

Isn't this cruelty just a kind of revenge?

'No, no!' insists the DA on the TV screen. The death penalty is not just revenge. It's a much needed deterrent. The defence lawyers point out that there's no evidence that it has any deterrent effect.

They quote figures showing that in states where executions have resumed after many years, murder rates have actually risen. Even a poll of US police chiefs ranked the death penalty last as a way of reducing violent crime.¹⁰

But the defence lawyers are defeated. As today's execution drew nearer, they filed appeal after appeal in a desperate effort to gain a stay. They've ransacked their brains and legal textbooks for anything that might cause a court to order further hearings. Now all their efforts have failed. The proof of that is that we are here, sitting in front of our TV sets, about to watch a man die.

What if he's innocent?

The USA has many TV evangelists. Tonight, which one of them will quote Camus? "Men who have set at the centre of their faith the staggering victim of a judicial error ought at least to hesitate before committing legal murder."¹¹

What if the condemned man didn't have a fair trial? How come people able to afford big name lawyers so rarely end up on death row?

Most people on death row are poor men whose court-appointed defence attorneys are not on high fees and often couldn't care less about the outcome. Some are pro-death penalty. A few of them are

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news

RCN moves to bar rapist from nursing career

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The Royal College of Nursing is mounting a legal challenge to reverse a decision which has allowed a convicted rapist to resume his career as a nurse.

The college wants the courts to overturn last month's decision of the United Kingdom Central Council on Nursing, the nurses' disciplinary body, to allow Yuen How Choy, a mental nurse aged 50, to practise again after he raped a former patient in her home in 1983.

He received a two-year sentence, 12 months of which was suspended, and was subsequently struck off by the UKCC. He has a previous conviction from 1972 for drugging a patient in order to have sex with her.

Mr Choy has been working for the past five months as a bank care assistant at Forest Lodge, a private 68-bed nursing home for the elderly and mentally ill in Uckfield, East Sussex. Care assistants, unlike

nurses, do not have to be registered in order to work.

The case has left the UKCC promising an urgent review at its June meeting of its procedures for restoring nurses to the register, having last June allowed the appeal of another convicted rapist to practise again. Subashan Bandhoo, 43, had been jailed in 1990 for raping an elderly patient.

A spokesman for the council acknowledged "there are issues we have to address" over the two decisions, and it will consider introducing a prescribed list of offences - rape, murder and child abuse, for example - which would debar a nurse from practising for life.

However, a spokesman said: "Legally, we are told, that might be open to civil challenge."

The council might therefore have to say restoration would only occur "in the most exceptional circumstances". The council acknowledged that in this case it had not fulfilled its duty of maintaining public confidence

in the registration process. The Royal College of Nursing - which represented Mr Choy in its trade-union role at his 1986 hearing, arguing he should not be struck off - is now wearing its professional hat, maintaining that "it is against the public interest" for him to practise after his two convictions.

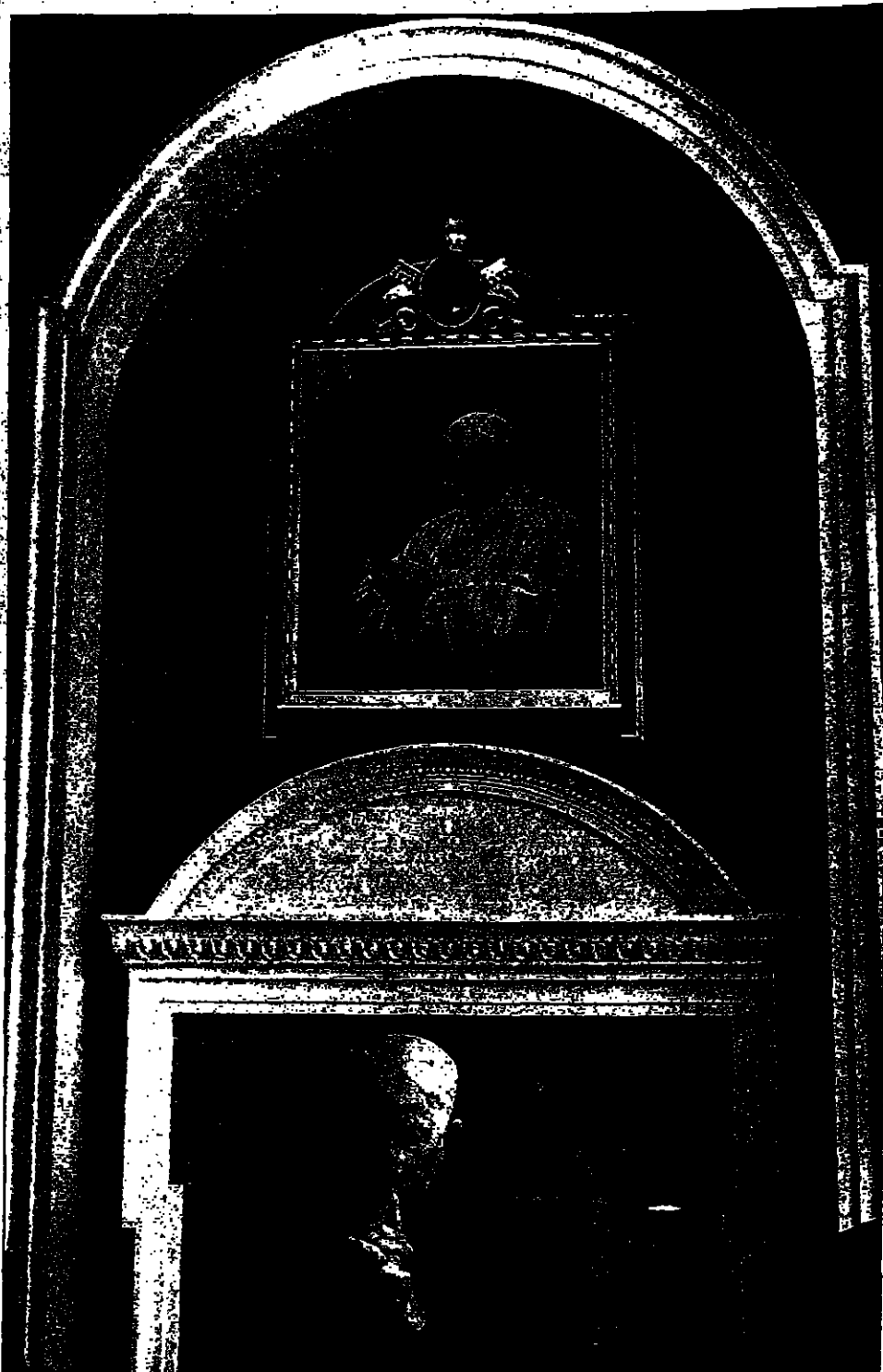
Restoring him to the register "goes against common sense", a spokeswoman said. The case, however, has also renewed arguments over the introduction of a General Social Services Council to cover care workers who, unlike doctors and nurses, are not subject to registration and cannot be struck off. The UKCC said: "There is obviously also an issue about the employment of unregulated staff in sensitive care environments. Employers clearly have a responsibility in this respect."

Carol Dille, director of nursing for Sussex Health Care which runs Forest Lodge, said it had only learnt of Mr Choy's history in February, but he had carried out his work "with care and professionalism". The company told the UKCC at his hearing that it would be willing to employ him as a nurse if he was restored to the register, but said yesterday that "for the immediate future" he would remain in his present role.

A spokesman for the RCN said some nurses have argued that those who rehabilitate themselves should be allowed to practise again. But in this case Mr Choy had clearly "abused his position as a nurse" to carry out the offences, adding: "It involved an abuse of power and abuse of trust."

East Sussex Health Authority, which registers Forest Lodge, said it had urged the company "to consider the wisdom" of employing someone with such a criminal record after it learnt of Mr Choy's employment. But the final decision rested with the nursing home, not the health authority whose only sanction is to seek de-registration of the home, a process subject to legal challenge.

A prayer for marriage



Cardinal Basil Hume at the bishops' conference yesterday

Photograph: Brian Harris

LOUISE JURY

The leaders of the Roman Catholic church yesterday appealed for a lifelong commitment to marriage to become a formal part of the civil service.

And in a broader effort to strengthen the institution, Cardinal Basil Hume and his bishops called for the complete process for ending marriages to be matched by preparations for

those intending to tie the knot. Speaking after the biannual bishops' conference in London, the Cardinal said it was important to ensure that the formal promises made at civil wedding ceremonies always explicitly referred to the legal definition of marriage.

While the marriage certificate was headed with this definition - "the union of one man and woman voluntarily entered into

for life to the exclusion of all others" - it was an optional part of the service. "Nobody has to say it," he said. "We want it stated. It is the law of the land."

The bishops repeated their support for the Government's new Family Law Bill, which aims to make divorce more difficult. But they expressed concern that preparations for marriage did not receive the same attention as procedures for ending it.

Smuggler fined £15,000 for Iran business deals

A businessman who smuggled aircraft and helicopter parts to Iran government procurement agencies was today fined £15,000 and ordered to pay prosecution costs of £5,000.

Terence Howe, 60, a former general manager of the British Hovercraft Corporation admitted the offence at Winchester Crown Court. His co-accused David Harbridge, 58, an aircraft engineer, who was said to have played a minor role in the operation, was fined £500. Both men pleaded guilty.

The prosecution told the court that equipment - including parts for three types of military helicopters and the P4 fighter bomber aircraft - was sent to Iran by an Isle of Wight company called British Hovercraft and Marine Consultants, of which Howe was the sole proprietor. The goods were sent via a diversionary route to Zurich, Switzerland, and then forwarded to Iran, said Mr Stephen Kramer QC.

The parts had been specially designed for military use, though Mr Justice Tuckey made it clear that he sentenced the men on the basis that they believed the parts could also be

put to civilian use. "Nevertheless," he said, "you knew they could not be exported without a licence and you deliberately chose to export the parts... without licences."

The judge said it was a serious offence which in Howe's case was aggravated by the fact that his attention had been drawn to the prohibition in 1992. Howe had, he said, set out to try and conceal what he was doing by routing the exports through Switzerland.

"I don't think it matters who suggested doing this, you say it was the Iranians, the prosecution say it was you. The fact is you did it and the reason was to avoid the prohibition."

In sentencing, the judge said he had taken into account the scale of the trade. About £183,000 (£119,000) had been involved in 13 separate transactions in the context of Howe's much larger legitimate business. He also took into account the nature of the parts involved which were "bits and pieces" rather than things which could obviously be labelled military.

The judge told Howe he had come "perilously close" to being sent to prison.

Sacked teachers 'bugged' at meeting

Two teachers this week won £24,000 compensation at an industrial tribunal from the owner of a private school who secretly taped them at a meeting.

Joy Kirby, 46, of Heddington, Northumberland, and Wendy Easen, 50, of Gosforth, had claimed unfair dismissal after being sacked from Musgrave Primary School, Gateshead.

Following a row over a netball match the teachers were asked to speak to Jeff Redmayne, the school's owner. The tribunal in Newcastle upon Tyne was told that Mr Redmayne used a tape machine hidden in the handle of a briefcase to record the meeting.

He claimed the meeting was the culmination of a feud between the two teachers and their

head, Pamela Wood. He said they had waged a campaign to discredit Mrs Wood by organising a netball club behind her back and then trying to blame her for not providing first aid.

Mr Redmayne had intended to prove, using the tape, that the teachers had changed their story between the original meeting with him in 1994 to a disciplinary hearing the following year.

But on Thursday the tribunal ruled that his claims had no substance. The chairman said: "Mr Redmayne decided the teachers were guilty of gross misconduct... He was not able to say what the collusion was about... no reasonable employer would have come to this decision."

Mrs Easen was awarded £11,500 and Mrs Kirby £12,500.

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sport

LONDON MARATHON: McColgan in line for triumph while men face most competitive race for years. Mike Rowbottom reports

Ceron surrounded by pretenders to his throne

All week, the leading contenders for tomorrow's London Marathon have been filing into press conferences by Tower Bridge, past the Little London Picture Parlour.

This tourist attraction advertises classic souvenir photographs in a variety of London-themed settings, including the Changing of the Guard, and Off With Her Head (individual or group executions to order).

If there is to be a changing of the guard tomorrow, Vincent Rousseau of Belgium, the only man to run under 2hr 08min

twice, is the man most likely to bring it about as he seeks to thwart Mexico's Dionicio Ceron in his ambition to complete an unprecedented hat-trick of victories in the men's event.

If Ceron should succumb, however, either to Rousseau, or his up-and-coming fellow countryman, German Silva, the double New York champion, then execution would hardly be the order of the day. Ceron has already established himself in London folklore for his performances in the last two races.

He was less than expansive in his pre-race comments, only

stirring himself to defend his decision to take 10 weeks out after the last win to launch a clothing company to go alongside the property business he has already established in his home country. But maybe he is saving his energies for tomorrow.

The introduction of Rousseau and Silva, as well as Portugal's Dionicio Castro, has set up what is probably the most competitive race in the London Marathon's 16-year history.

It is also, in the opinion of the Marathon's widely respected general manager, Alan Storey,

the most competitive event from a domestic point of view.

He believes that all five of the leading Britons competing are capable of getting below 2:10. Their efforts will form a race within a race, given that the leading Briton is virtually guaranteed the third and final place in the Olympic marathon.

Paul Evans and the 1993 winner, Eamonn Martin, are the Britons most likely to do well, although Evans has cast serious doubts on whether he would take up an Olympic marathon place in Atlanta if offered it.

Evans, nevertheless, appears to have the best prospect among the British runners, given his second place behind Silva in the New York Marathon four months ago. However, Martin, who recovered his recent fortunes with *elan* by winning the Chicago Marathon last year, is optimistic about his chances after a preparation which has been far smoother than in the last two years. Martin is a proven winner – and he wants to run in Atlanta.

Mark Hudspeth, the 1994 Commonwealth bronze medalist, Jon Solly, the 1986 10,000 metres champion, and Gary Staines, the pacemaker for the past two years, are the other leading British contenders.

However, it turns out, this is widely acknowledged as the most competitive race in the history of the London Marathon, as the fastest man in the field, Rousseau, has acknowledged. "This is a marathon winners' race," he said. "I don't want to lead and then find a knife in my back."

If Liz McColgan's new coach, Norway's inaugural world marathon champion Grete Waitz, is correct, this could be the best opportunity for Scot-

land's former world 10,000m record holder to win an event where she has a third and fifth place to her credit.

McColgan certainly appears a far more relaxed and confident athlete under the guidance of the woman whom she admits has been an idol to her, and this looks like her chance to register the victory which was expected when she signed her original four-year deal with the London event in 1992.

Her main rivals will be two Poles, Renata Kokowska and the 1995 champion, Malgorzata Sobanska, and three Kenyans

– Angela Kamana, second in Berlin last year, Joyce Chepchumba, fourth in last year's New York marathon, and Helen Kimaiyo, a 69min 30sec half-marathon runner.

It is Kimaiyo's debut, but as McColgan knows, many things are possible in such a position. Her debut victory in New York five years ago remains her personal best for the distance, and the fastest marathon debut by a woman – 2:27:38. She is confident that she can beat that by some distance tomorrow. If things go well for her, it should be a memorable event.

Rousseau masters a philosophy

Mike Rowbottom meets the Belgian who is the fastest man in the field

Vincent Rousseau is engagingly honest about his capabilities: "I can't dance, I can't sing, I've got no rhythm, but I can run."

That is beyond dispute. This 33-year-old Belgian enters tomorrow's London Marathon as the fastest man in the field and the only man in history to have run two marathons in less than 2hr 08min. But for all his ability and achievement, today is going to be a pig of a day for him, because it always is.

"The day before the race is more heavy than the race itself," he said. "When you are on the run, you are on the inside. You let the dogs go away..."

He welcomes the felicitous image with a puckish grin which transforms his wan features. Rousseau looks like a man who has suffered for his art – pale as a clown, pin-thin – but his droll humour keeps on breaking through to transform the picture.

It was evident earlier this week as he explained his controversial decision not to race in Atlanta because of the hot and humid conditions. "Some people cannot understand why, when it comes to the Olympics, I say 'no thank-you'," he said, with a grin and a flip of his hand. It is not controversial with him, because he has thought it through as he appears to think everything through in his life.

After several distressing experiences of running in hot conditions, he decided that, if he was not happy, he would not race. He has a contract with his home federation stating that he does not have to represent his country if temperatures exceed 18C (64.5F). If anybody doubted the seriousness of his position, he

underlined it last year when he walked away from the start line of the Rotterdam Marathon, and a guaranteed appearance fee of \$100,000 (£66,000) because temperatures had risen to 70F. Had he run only a few steps, he would have received his money in full. Odd Rousseau may be, but no one could ever accuse him of being cynical.

"It is a physiological thing for me," he said. "I think it is easier for me to run 2:07 in the cold than a 28min 40sec 10,000 metres in hot conditions."

There is no escape clause for him in tomorrow's race, but in London such a clause is hardly necessary. With the two Mexicans, Dionicio Ceron and German Silva, in the field, along with Domingos Castro of Portugal and the strongest British contingent in recent years, the temperature will not be uppermost in Rousseau's mind.

"I have no way to win the Olympics, because I cannot run in hot weather and, if I go to the Olympics, I go there to do something," he said. "I prefer to win the big marathons."

He is cautious about his prospects of adding the London title to his wins in Rotterdam, Reims and Brussels, having undergone an Achilles tendon injury in January. Asked if he was in good shape for tomorrow, he actually considered the question rather than giving the stock reply. "Yes," he said, "I'm not bad."

Rousseau is a thoughtful, solitary character. He lives alone in the small village of Masnuy-St Jean, near Mons, and enjoys gardening and nature photography. The latter interest has been indulged on his rest days

when he has been training at altitude in the Pyrenees.

"I can do mountains, and wildlife. But I do not have enough time to do it properly while I am running. I will do it afterwards for pleasure."

The question of when his photography will begin in earnest is an open one. But he does acknowledge that if he is to break Belayneh Dinsamo's eight-year-old world record of 2:06:50 – 30 seconds faster than his best – he will have to do it in the next year or so.

Like time's winged chariot, ever at his back he hears Gebreselassie and Tergat hurrying near. The Ethiopian's world 10,000m record of 26:43.53 is 40 seconds faster than his best, and converts – in purely arithmetic terms – to a 2:04 marathon time.

Rousseau, however, feels Haile Gebreselassie's step is too high for marathon running. The recent half-marathon world record of 58:51 set by Kenya's world cross-country champion, Paul Tergat, can be converted to

a time of around 2:05, and Rousseau feels that if Tergat turns to the marathon in a couple of years, he could be running times beyond the reach of Europeans, and even Mexicans.

Rousseau makes these calculations with a twinkle in his eye, and you wonder how much irony is in his delivery. The marathon is an unpredictable event, and as he remarks himself, "men are not machines".

Paradoxically, the worst moment of Rousseau's career occurred when he set his personal best of 2:07:20 at Berlin last year, because he was beaten by Kenya's Sammy Lekel, who ran 2:07:02, the second fastest ever. Rousseau led after 39 of the 42 kilometres. "I lost a lot in a few kilometres," he said.

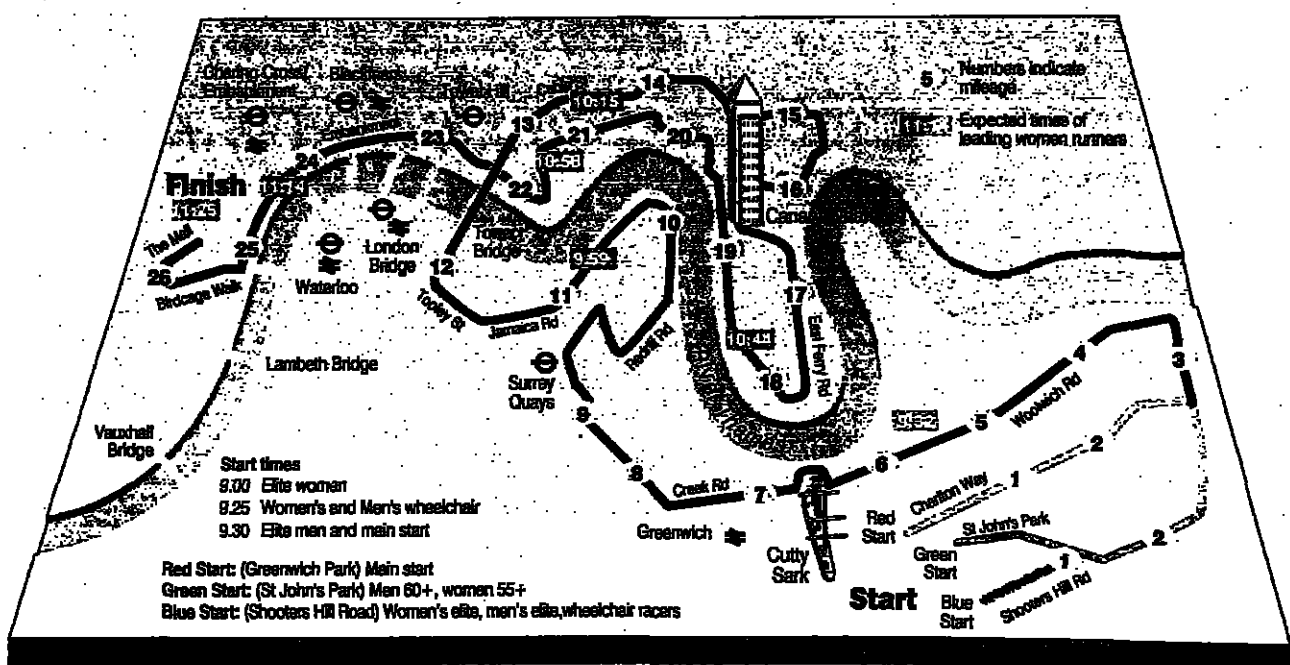
Rousseau, however, is a driven man. "Running is a drug for people like me," he said. "If you cannot get your adrenaline going, you are sick. When I cannot run, I feel heavy, I feel fat." This man is not fat. He will be even thinner by noon tomorrow.



Vincent Rousseau, the only man to have twice run a marathon in under 2hr 08min, practises for tomorrow's race in London

Photograph: Robert Hallam

The Flora London Marathon 1996



Cottage holidays with THE INDEPENDENT

Today is the final day of our cottage holiday offer, enabling you to escape to the countryside for a Spring break. We've teamed up with Blakes Country Cottages to offer readers the opportunity to sample Blakes great family holidays in a selection of hand-picked properties for just £5 per person per night.

Blakes Country Cottages are one of the largest and most experienced cottage holiday companies in Britain, with a range of almost 2000 properties to choose from in the most popular parts of Britain.

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The offer allows you to stay for £5 per person per night and you must stay for a minimum of seven nights. Holidays can be taken between 20 April - 24 May 1996. Accommodation is suitable for parties of two to twelve. Accommodation must be booked at maximum occupancy, for example a party of four cannot occupy accommodation which sleeps seven.

HOW TO QUALIFY

Simply collect four differently numbered tokens from the seven we have published in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday. Today we are printing our final token, Token 7.

Pictured is Ardbeckish House, Loch Awe, Nr Oban, Scotland. Set in 20 acres of mature woodland, the house and well tended grounds enjoy breathtaking panoramic views across the stunning loch to the mountains and glens beyond. The main house contains converted suites varied in size, with each retaining their individual character and ambience. Within the grounds are further traditional style, custom designed, detached cottages.

HOW TO BOOK

• Call Blakes Country Cottages on 01282 445221 for a brochure and reservations, quoting the "Independent £5 per night offer".

• Give your advisor the following details:

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(b) The number of adults and children on holiday.

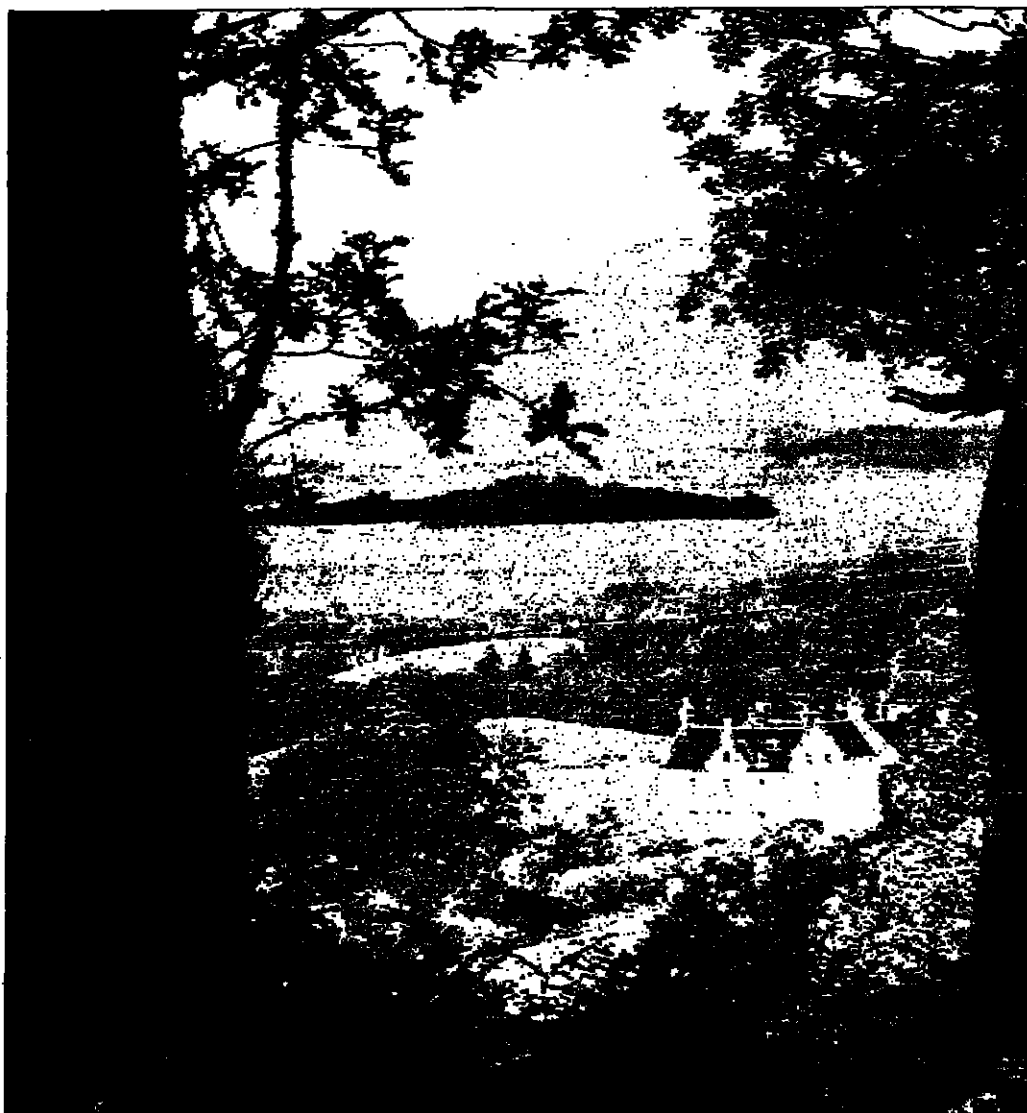
(c) The holiday start and end dates.

• You will then be offered a choice of suitable properties and will be given details of the location, facilities and accommodation.

• If you wish to confirm your booking you will be asked for full payment by credit card or cheque.

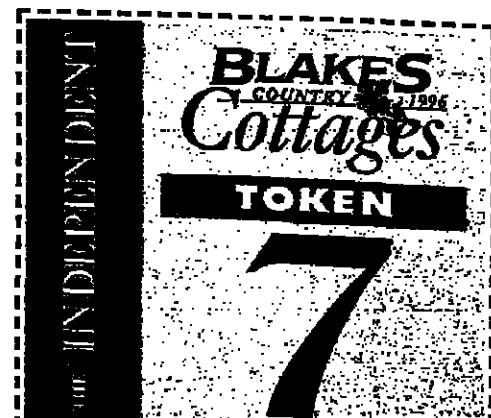
• You will be asked to send your tokens with your cheque (made payable to Blakes Country Cottages) to: Blakes Country Cottages, Spring Mill, Earby, Nr Colne, Lancashire, BB8 6RN. If you are paying by credit card, your advisor will tell you where to send your tokens to.

• Please note, you may book immediately before you have collected your four tokens, but you will require the tokens for final confirmation of your booking.



TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 1 The Cottage Holiday offer is subject to availability.
- 2 Over 200 units of accommodation are available per holiday week.
- 3 Units must be booked at maximum occupancy, e.g. a party of four cannot occupy a unit which sleeps seven.
- 4 Holiday must start and finish between 20 April and 24 May 1996.
- 5 Blakes Country Cottages, the name of which is used under licence from Blakes Holidays Ltd, is a trading division of Holiday Cottages Group Ltd.
- 6 Normal terms and conditions of booking apply. These are published in Blakes Country Cottages brochures and are available upon request.
- 7 Prices exclude optional insurance and pet charges (where applicable).



MIDDLE EAST IN TURMOIL

Israel seeks US help for ceasefire

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

In the wake of the massacre of 101 Lebanese at Qana, Israel is looking for a ceasefire through a United States mediation effort. The terms of the ceasefire are likely to restate the understanding of 1993 under which Israel and Hizbollah undertook not to fire at civilian targets outside the Israeli-occupied zone in the south of Lebanon.

Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, arrives in Damascus today for talks with President Hafez al-Assad, and Dennis Ross, the US peace coordinator, was expected in Israel last night. Within hours of the slaughter of refugees at Qana, President Bill Clinton reversed his previous tolerance of the Israeli operation and called for an immediate ceasefire.

The change in the American position led Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, to alter his own political course. Ehud Barak, his Foreign Minister, had wanted to negotiate with Syria and Lebanon while keeping them under pressure by continuing the bombardment. Late on Thursday night, after an emergency cabinet meeting, Mr Peres said: "It is also possible to conduct the negotiations for new understandings when there is a ceasefire on the ground. We don't have to be firing."

After a brief hiatus in Israeli artillery fire on Thursday, its heavy guns once again opened fire as Katyusha rockets fell on northern Galilee. Mr Peres has always said that the aim of Operation Grapes of Wrath was to safeguard the northern border of Israel from rocket attack.

In fact Israel's real objectives were more ambitious. These are no longer attainable since an Israeli army howitzer fired 155mm shells into the refugees huddled in the Fijian UN post.

Aluf Ben, a commander in the daily *Ha'aretz*, says that in asking for a ceasefire Israel has failed on a number of fronts, including a demand for greater latitude in retaliating against Hizbollah than was agreed under the 1993 understanding.

Other notable failures include underestimating President Assad. At the end of last month he appeared isolated by the Sharm el-Sheikh summit on terrorism arranged by President Clinton, at which Israel was supported by most Arab leaders.

Following the failure of Grapes of Wrath to force him to rein in Hizbollah, President Assad has strengthened his pre-eminence in Lebanon and the Arab world.

Mr Peres appears to have failed to control the Israeli army and notably the head of its Northern Command, Major General Amir Levine. In contrast to Yitzhak Rabin, his predecessor as prime minister and a former Chief of Staff, Mr



Quiet moment: Israeli soldiers at an artillery base near the Lebanese border taking part in early morning prayers yesterday

Peres delegated his responsibilities as Defence Minister. *Ha'aretz* says that under General Levine's leadership what Mr Peres had intended as a surgical strike became an attack "on the civil infrastructure of Lebanon and climaxed with the killing of dozens of civilians". Israeli aircraft have also attacked Palestinian refugee camps and Lebanese and Syrian army units.

It is unlikely that a ceasefire in Lebanon will do much harm to Mr Peres in the election on 29 May, though it may not do him as much good as he once hoped. One poll published yesterday, taken mainly before the Qana massacre, showed him losing one percentage point against Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of Likud, who will be his rival for the prime minister's office.

Mr Peres has a 5 per cent lead with 50 per cent of the vote, compared to 45 per cent for Mr Netanyahu, who is himself a strong supporter of intervention in Lebanon.

There is no sign of any reversal over the attack on Qana among Israelis, who see the operation as a whole as defensive. No Israelis, either civilian or military, have been killed since it started 10 days ago. A poll showed 89 per cent saying Grapes of Wrath would not affect the way they voted.

The only withdrawal of support for Mr Peres is among the Israeli-Arab community, 14 per cent of the electorate, whose total support he will need at the polls in six weeks time if he is to win.

Mr Peres may not get what he wanted from Grapes of Wrath but he does need to make good, at least until after the election, on his pledge that Katyusha rockets will stop falling. A Hizbollah official in Beirut said yesterday: "What is important is returning to the July 1993 understandings and having guarantees that the Israeli aggression would not be repeated. Otherwise, our rockets will be the best reply."

Israeli intelligence was reported yesterday as admitting that Hizbollah has lost a maximum of 20 men and the buildings attacked by Israel were empty.

An Israeli commentator notes that Yitzhak Rabin used to say that as a rule you could tell the loser in any war between Israel and the Arabs by looking at who called for a ceasefire first. By this token the outcome of Grapes of Wrath is likely to be a defeat for Israel.

Egypt undergoes a change of heart

ADEL DARWISH

Israel's shelling of Lebanon has prompted a change of heart from Egypt, a country that has enjoyed normal relations with the Jewish State for 18 years.

In an Egyptian newspaper Mohammed Sayed Tantawi, head of the Azhar mosque and university - the country's official church - described Hamas suicide bombers as "martyrs".

The cleric's remarks comprised a U-turn from earlier statements he had made but were nevertheless recognised as representing the "official" view.

The moderate head of *Zohar* criticised "the criminal Zionist regime [of Israel] and [the] clear support of the arrogant government of the USA, and called on Hizbollah 'to resist this invasion until [the Israelis] become regretful of their criminal actions'."

His comments were interpreted by Iranian commentators as encouraging Hizbollah to reject any ceasefire proposals unless they involve Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon.

Support for Lebanon also came from Iran's foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, who sent a message to the headquarters of the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Jeddah, urging the Muslim world to mobilise aid for the Lebanese people. And many Saudi-owned newspapers joined in the condemnation of Israel's aggression against "innocent children" in Lebanon, justifying Hizbollah attacks on Israel as a "legitimate struggle".

A number of analysts saw the French and American ceasefire proposals as raising the political profile of Hizbollah to a status beyond what the extremists group had expected.

"Israel's operation in Lebanon has only succeeded in turning Hizbollah from a Lebanese militia into an essential partner in the wider peaceful settlement in the Middle East," the veteran exiled Iranian commentator Amir Taheri wrote in the Saudi daily *Asharq al-Awsat*.

Charity appeals

The following charities are appealing for donations to help Lebanese civilians:

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Damascus meeting for West to end conflict

JOHN LICHFIELD and
DAVID USBORNE

International efforts to end the conflict in southern Lebanon will reach a new level of urgency today when foreign ministers of America, Russia, France and Italy meet in Damascus to increase pressure for a ceasefire.

French officials said the four would seek to co-ordinate the different diplomatic efforts to bring the violence to an end. This follows a call last night from Russian and Western leaders, gathered in Moscow for today's nuclear summit, for an immediate end to the fighting.

Israel has already said it will call off its troops if Hizbollah stops firing. Syria and Lebanon pledged yesterday to put pressure on the Islamic militants.

Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, said the fighting would end within five days.

US officials, galvanised finally by Thursday's massacre of Lebanese refugees by misdirected Israeli shells, were hoping for an even swifter solution. But the Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urged the militant Islamist guerrillas supported by Tehran, to "step up" their "heroic holy war" against the "Zionist usurpers".

Washington believes that, whatever Tehran may think, Syria holds the key to a rapid settlement. US officials hope that Damascus can persuade Hizbollah not only to cease firing rockets at northern Israel but to accept a longer-term settlement, reviving and strengthening a 1993 agreement in which both sides promised not to target civilians.

The US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, will fly to Damascus today. Earlier, President Clinton, speaking in Moscow, said: "We have a chance [to stop the shelling]".

Edging the closest yet to even a mild rebuke to Israel, he said: "The parties have got to agree to a ceasefire... (Otherwise) it's almost impossible for innocent civilians not to be hurt and killed."

The UN won one diplomatic battle yesterday when - with British and French help - it defeated in the UN Security Council an attempt by Egypt to condemn Israel for the deaths of up to 100 civilians at the UN base at Qana. The resolution adopted simply joined the international chorus of requests for an immediate ceasefire.

The UN's most senior military advisor, General Frank Van Kappen, arrived in Beirut yesterday to demand explanations from Israel of how its shells came to flatten the headquarters of a Fijian battalion of UN peacekeepers.

Peres's sequel. "I am in favour of a ceasefire," he said, "so long as it is binding on both sides. But if Hizbollah fire more Katyushas into Northern Israel, we have to go on exploiting our superior firepower."

Where does all this leave the tattered Middle East peace process? "We have to continue negotiating," contended Mr Zagouri. But after Qana, won't it be hard going? "Maybe," sighed Zagouri, "but it always has been."

'How dare people all over the world blame us?'

ERIC SILVER
Jerusalem

It was like any Friday lunchtime in the Ben-Yehuda pedestrian mall, where Israeli Jerusalem comes to see and to be seen: bustling, loquacious, anarchic.

The cafes were serving coffee as fast as the espresso machines could gush them out. Husband and wife were queuing to buy flowers for the sabbath. A puffed Russian immigrant busker was squeezing out '50s ballads on the accordion.

The weekend tabloids, littering the cafe tables, splashed full colour pictures of the carnage wrought by Israeli howitzers at Qana.

Everyone had an opinion, but no one was volunteering. Like their government, Israelis were on the defensive. They were neither callous, nor indifferent. They regretted the slaughter, for the Lebanese sake and for the retribution it may yet bring themselves.

But this was a nation closing ranks, rather than hanging its head, a nation conditioned to the horrors of war, schooled in its muzzling logic, and determined that Hizbollah must bear its share of the responsibility.

"How dare people all over the world blame Israel?" asked Gula Dagan, a veteran Jerusalem painter. "Supposing we did know that there were civilians there, does that mean we have to sit back and let Hizbollah bomb us?"

"If the Lebanese government allows Hizbollah to bomb Israel from its territory without lifting a finger, Hizbollah should at least have enough humanity to keep people away from their launch sites."

Nathan Gertner, a 45-year-old money-changer, admitted to "feeling bad" about the massacre, but argued in a war with guerrillas, sheltering behind civilians, "accidents" were inevitable.

"It was a mistake by our forces," said Gertner, who served for six years in the regular army and 20 in the reserves. "But this is not the first time that

Hizbollah has fixed us. With modern artillery, it's all automatic. The radar identifies the source of fire and the computer targets it. But the battery commander should have checked the location more precisely than he did."

Avi Zagouri, a 44 year old barman, agreed that Israel had made a mistake, but insisted that Hizbollah had invited it. "It's not as if the shells were aimed at civilians," he said.

Mr Zagouri, who fought in Lebanon during the 1982 Israeli invasion, still supported Shimon Peres's sequel. "I am in favour of a ceasefire," he said, "so long as it is binding on both sides. But if Hizbollah fire more Katyushas into Northern Israel, we have to go on exploiting our superior firepower."

Where does all this leave the tattered Middle East peace process? "We have to continue negotiating," contended Mr Zagouri. But after Qana, won't it be hard going? "Maybe," sighed Zagouri, "but it always has been."

Fraught relations with China colour US elections

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

With their relationship the most fraught it has been in years, China and the US yesterday held high-level talks whose outcome could determine whether Washington's policy towards Peking becomes a major issue in the forthcoming Presidential election campaign here.

Neither Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, nor his counterpart Qian Qichen was under any illusion that their meeting in the Hague would resolve outstanding problems; the best to be expected, experts here believe, was that it would prevent ties deteriorating further.

The discussions would be "candid, serious and pragmatic," the Chinese Foreign Minister said - a diplomat's way of saying that much disagreement was to be expected.

Even before the talks started, Mr Qian poured cold water on the US initiative, announced by Mr Clinton in Seoul this week, for a four-party Korean peace conference involving the two Koreas, China and the US. Washington is hoping China's involvement will prod North Korea into serious bargaining, but Mr Qian indicated yesterday that the dispute was up to the Koreans themselves to resolve. Only when the "directly concerned" parties had settled

their differences could such four-way talks start.

Korea however is a mere pinprick in today's array of Sino-American arguments. Frayed nerves have barely settled after China's intimidation of Taiwan which saw two US aircraft carrier battle groups dispatched to the region. Washington is angry at China's inability - or unwillingness - to prevent wholesale copyright infringement and piracy of US technology by its companies.

One reason for the ever-increasing Chinese trade surplus, currently at \$34bn (£22bn), is also disbelieving of the Peking government's claim to have known nothing of the sale

of nuclear weapons-related technology to Pakistan, in breach of international efforts to curb arms proliferation.

China's human rights record is a constant source of complaint, as is what the US sees as Chinese expansionism in East Asia. These worries in part prompted the closer security partnership between the US and Japan presented during President Clinton's visit to Tokyo this week - accords denounced by China as harbinger of a new American doctrine of "containment" directed against itself.

None of these disputes is likely to be settled by the Christopher/Qian talks yesterday. If they are not, however, the

risk increases that America's China policy will be held hostage by domestic politics.

For all their other differences, Mr Clinton and Senator Bob Dole, his probable Republican opponent in November, have hewn much the same line on China. Both favour maintaining Peking's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) trading status when it comes up for renewal each June, on the grounds that to deny it would only make communication more difficult with a country that, like it or not, is emerging as a regional superpower.

But both are under pressure from within their own parties. "Do Republicans love trade

more than they loathe tyranny?" thundered Pat Buchanan this week, as Mr Dole's main challenger kept alive the threat that he could make an independent run for the White House unless his views were not adequately reflected in Republican policy. On Capitol Hill too, a growing minority of Republicans wants to "punish" China by denying MFN.

Mr Clinton faces similar protests by many Congressional Democrats, some of whom object to China's human rights record while others complain about Peking's trade practices which they say, like Mexico's, unfairly cost American workers their jobs.

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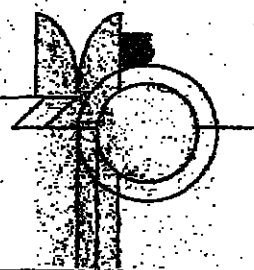


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G7 nuclear summit: President's agenda sidelined by IMF threats and Chechen flare-up

Crises take the fizz out of Yeltsin's party

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

The workmen had barely finished hanging out the coloured flags on the streets of Moscow when the fizz went out of Boris Yeltsin's party, a get-together of the top seven industrial powers which is supposed to be about nuclear safety but which was yesterday dominated by a host of other crises.

The Russian president's plan to use the meeting as a stage on which to demonstrate his international stature to a sceptical electorate was fast falling flat last night as a fierce domestic row broke out over Chechnya, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) threatened to postpone payments in a \$10bn loan.

The summit's agenda - what to do about the world's ageing power stations, lethal radioactive dumps, and poorly guarded fissile materials - was also sidelined by the tragedy in Lebanon, which produced a flurry of statements from the assembled leaders, calling for a ceasefire. Both Mr Yeltsin and President Bill Clinton dispatched their envoys to the region, while John Major - in between calling for an end to the ban on British beef - called for an "interim ceasefire" as a first step to peace.

Like a recurring fever, the Chechen war flared up again when the Communist-dominated lower house of parliament summoned Pavel Grachev, the Russian defence minister, to explain the death of at least 53 federal troops in a Chechen ambush on Tuesday - in a war that Mr Yeltsin claims has ended. The general offered to quit, prompting speculation that he is about to be fired, although his move was more of a gesture, as the president is the only official empowered to accept his resignation.

And Mr Yeltsin, in an unusual move, vowed to punish the responsible commanders. "The military leadership is to blame," he said. It was a rare attack on the military hardliners, and comes amid growing reports that they have been withholding information about the continuing hostilities in Chechnya. Mr Yeltsin's problems were compounded still further by rumblings from the IMF that it may withhold at least one instalment of the \$10bn (£6.5bn) loan it recently agreed to make to Russia, allowing the government to pay long-delayed wages and pensions.

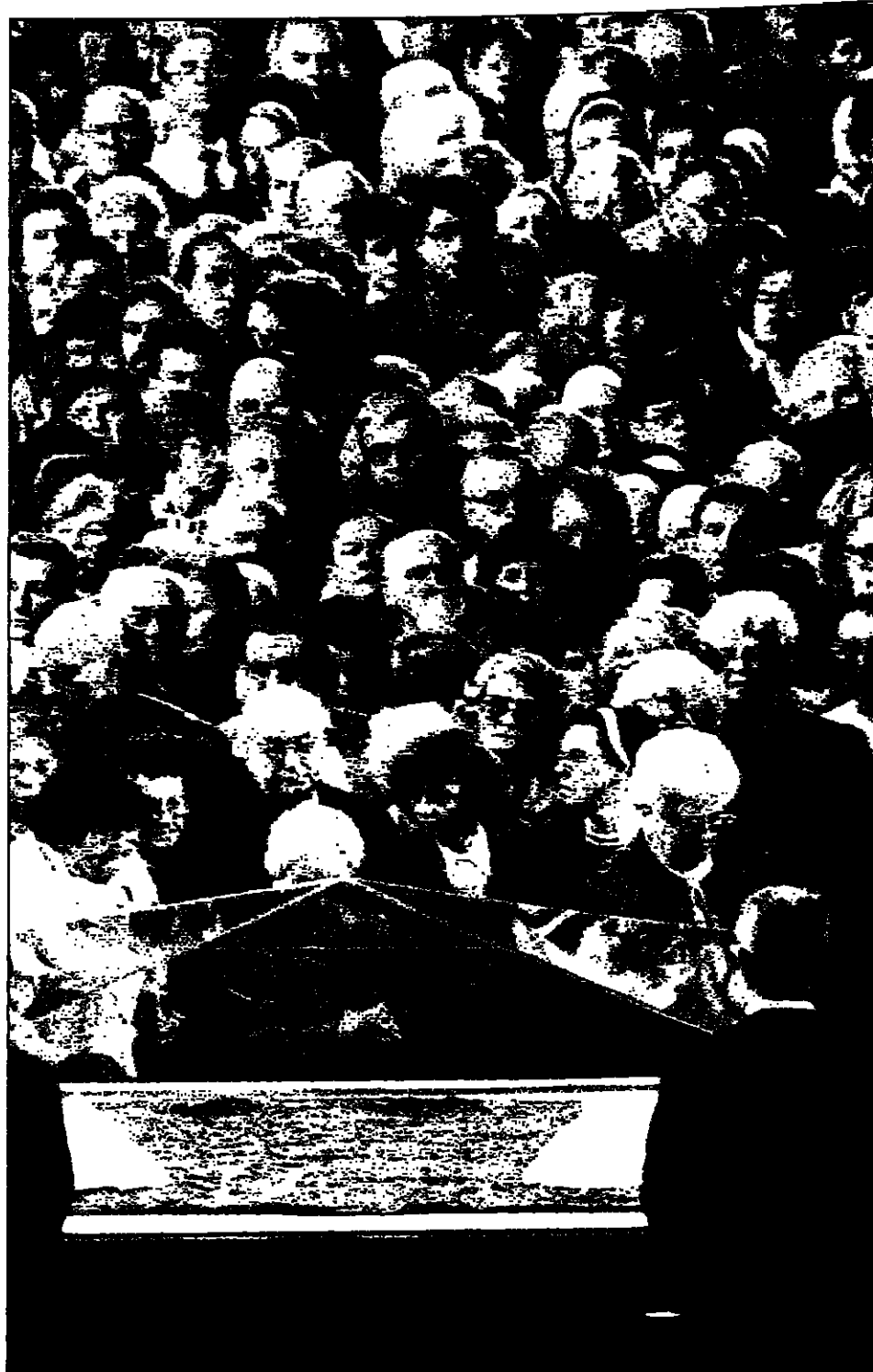
An official said that the fund was "concerned by signs that Russia may be backing away from reforms". It was a clear

warning that payments may be stopped if Russia fails to meet the strict fiscal conditions laid down by the IMF.

None of this fits into the plan that Mr Yeltsin must have had in mind when he invited the G7 to Moscow nearly a year ago. Yesterday, as the media gathered for the weekend meeting on a warm spring day, he said he was "fighting fit, despite his difficulties". But he seemed to have a surplus of the latter.

The G7 leaders, who last night attended at a lavish banquet in the Kremlin marking the summit's opening, have come to Moscow to discuss nuclear safety and security, but it is also a demonstration of Western support for Mr Yeltsin before June's presidential elections. They are keen to prevent a victory by the resurgent Communists, whom they believe could stop Russia's reforms dead in their tracks.

They are, however, usually careful not to admit as much in public. Asked whether he supported Mr Yeltsin's efforts to win a second term, Mr Major yesterday replied: "That is a matter for the Russian people. It would be impertinent for me to express a preference. We do have a strong view that the reform process is very important and wish to see it proceeding."



Divine relic: Pilgrims in Trier cathedral in south-west Germany to see the Holy Robe, said to be worn by Jesus on his way to Calvary. Visitors have until 16 May to see the robe in what is only its third public showing this century
Photograph: AP

IN BRIEF

Bosnian armies fail to withdraw

London — The former warring parties in Bosnia had not completed the withdrawal of their forces to barracks yesterday as stipulated in the Dayton peace agreement, but the Nato commander, Admiral Leighton Smith, said he was satisfied there was "clear intent to comply", writes Christopher Bellamy. The three armies - Bosnian government, Croat and Serb, totalling 300,000 troops - were supposed to have withdrawn to barracks and placed their heavy weapons in storage. Admiral Smith said he was satisfied purely technical factors were behind the delay.

Crash jet's black box found

Petrozavodsk-Kamchatka, Russia — Searchers found the flight-data recorder in the wreckage of a cargo jet that crashed earlier this month in Russia's Far East with 21 people believed on board. The black box was found under 3.5 metres of snow and soil, about 150 metres from wreckage found earlier on the slopes of the volcano where the plane crashed on 5 April. AP

Murderer executed by lethal injection

Smyma, Delaware — James Clark Jr, 39, who wanted to die rather than spend the rest of his life in jail for killing his adoptive parents, was executed by lethal injection at the Delaware Correctional Centre in the United States yesterday. Reuter

Easter Island script deciphered

Auckland — After seven years of work, a New Zealand linguist has deciphered a strange script found on Easter Island showing the inhabitants were the first in Oceania to write. Dr Steven Fischer said the script, known as rongorongo, is made up of chants in the Rapanui language, Easter Island's Polynesian tongue, and tell the story of creation. Reuter

Mogadishu fighting flares again

Mogadishu — At least 21 people were killed and 43 wounded in fighting in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, between forces of warlord Mohamed Farah Aided and his former ally, Osman Ali Hassan Ali. Reuter

Earthquake rocks northern Chile

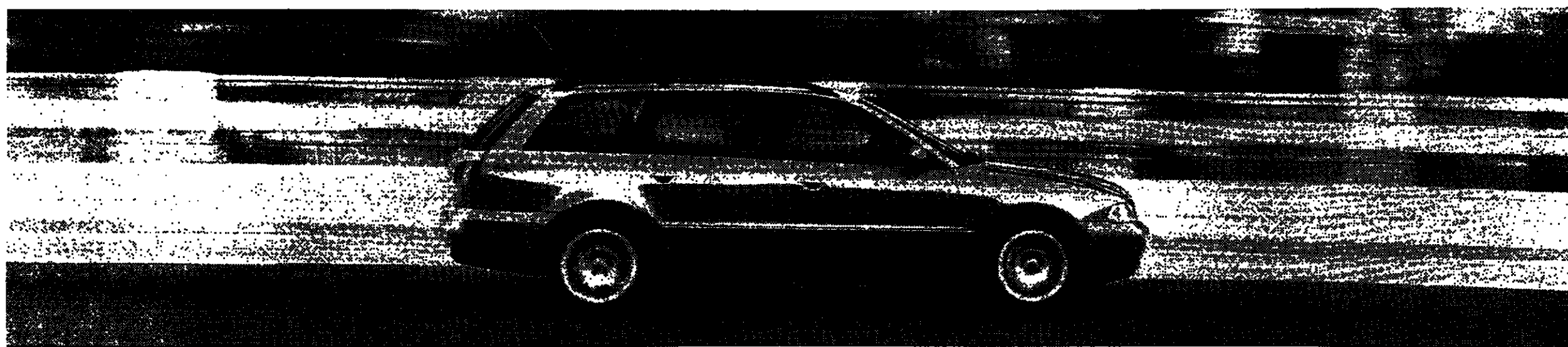
Santiago — Northern Chile was shaken on Thursday by a powerful tremor measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale but no damage was reported, local radio reported. Reuter

Protesters delay nuclear waste ship

Sydney — Anti-nuclear protesters delayed the loading of a ship with nuclear waste in Australia, chaining themselves to the ship's loading crane and accusing authorities of trying to dump the waste in Britain. The 21 Greenpeace activists mounted the protest in the morning darkness despite police guards. Reuter

Biologist cleared of attempted poisoning

Wellington — A biologist accused of trying to poison her former lover, an internationally renowned plant scientist, was found not guilty by a New Zealand jury. Victoria Caldwell, 46, was alleged to have administered acrylamide monomer, a nerve toxin, to Professor David Lloyd on 12 December 1992. The couple began a relationship in 1985, but it ended after Professor Lloyd met his present wife in California in 1990. Professor Lloyd is blind, paralysed from the shoulders down and can speak only with great difficulty. Reuter



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Faithful flock to hear Silvio the superstar

The most eager to appear in front of the camera in this campaign has been Mr. TV himself, Silvio Berlusconi. Of seven appointments he had one day this week, five were appearances on television channels, one was a £600-a-plate fund-raising dinner, and the last was an encounter with the women's caucus of his party, Forza Italia. Not once during the campaign has he held a public meeting; every one of his appearances has been in front of a hand-picked audience of faithful supporters.

Evidently, his advisers think it would be bad for his image to be seen under pressure from hecklers. To judge by the kind of people who support him, though, one wonders how much good it can do him to be seen among his own kind. The women's caucus meeting was filled with smart, over-perfumed ladies who spent most of the time ignoring the speeches and talking into their mobile phones.

The speakers tried very hard to be cutting about the elections and the centre-left opposition, but did not quite manage. "The real election campaign begins when the polls close!" was one less than successful slogan.

None of this mattered, though; the only thing that interested most people was the arrival of Silvio the superstar. Too bad that "our great president, a great man who inspires us and

fills us with joy every time he speaks" turned up more than three hours late to his own meeting.

Mr Berlusconi eventually arrived, breathless from his latest television interview, in a theatre delirious with the aroma of Chanel and sweat. He stayed only half an hour before dashing off to his fund-raiser, where the dessert trolley was threatening to disappear back into the kitchen. Far from objecting to his lateness, the crowd seemed positively thrilled at their leader's overpacked programme. "What do you want to be when you grow up?" he asked an eight-year-old boy called Matteo. "Silvio Berlusconi," came the response. Only Mr Berlusconi's billions can buy that kind of publicity.

The centre-left has been up to some strange tricks, too, with one-time card-carrying Communists frequenting the gilded drawing-rooms of the aristocracy. The two left-wing candidates for central Rome, Walter Veltroni and Tana de Ziliotto, both of them well-versed in the art of social charm, were hobnobbing with Contessa

ELECTION DIARY

Stefania Aldrovandini and her friends at Palazzo Taverna last week. Two nights ago, the whole coalition was invited for champagne and canapés on the terraces of Palazzo Pecci-Biunti overlooking the Capitoline Hill – an occasion explained by the fact that Countess Donatella Pecci-Biunti is bosom pals with the wife of the outgoing Prime Minister, Lamberto Dini.

Apparently the aristocrats are fascinated by these new friends of theirs, finding them less vulgar than the parvenu Mr Berlusconi. Once the blue-bloods would have held cocktail parties to help fight the left; their changing allegiances neatly illustrate just how topsy-turvy Italian politics has become.

Of course, at least part of the centre-left isn't left-wing at all. Mr Dini is a free-market conservative, and his candidate for the Senate in the Sorrento peninsula, Mario D'Urso, is a former president of Lehman Brothers, the merchant bank. The Anglophile Mr D'Urso is very much the upper-class social butterfly, conducting his campaign like a never-ending garden party, driving off for tea with the British ambassador one minute and taking his private speedboat to Capri the next ("He is one of the few people who can open Gianni Agnelli's fridge any time he likes," one supporter noted.)

When I met him, he was wearing what only the truly well-connected can get away with on formal occasions: a salmon pink golf shirt emblazoned with a campaign slogan beneath a brown tweed jacket. When I told him I had to go because I hadn't been invited to a dinner being given in honour of the visiting Mr Veltroni, he retorted: "It is my dinner, and I invite you."

I was put on my guard, though: using the pretext of giving me his private phone number, Mr D'Urso neatly filched my only pen and put it into his pocket. He gave it back to me, but only at the end of the evening: a subtle warning not to divulge too much of what I had just seen and heard.

Such immaculate command of the situation is not something Mr D'Urso shares with the right-wing candidate, Carlo Taormina, who spent last Sunday morning doing the rounds of churches in his Rome constituency. Arriving at Piazza Bologna, home to Rome University and a well-known neo-Fascist stronghold, he confidently marched up to the church of Sant'Ippolito with a handful of campaign workers and began leafleting the congregation. Unluckily for him, he had picked the one left-wing parish in the area and he was promptly ejected from the premises. It's nothing personal, explained the priest, Ettore Parretti, "but here we help the poor, tramps and immigrants whose most frequent complaints are about harassment from people like you."

Andrew Gumbel



Wishing well: Supporters of the centre-left 'Olive Tree' alliance at a rally in Rome to boost their profile for tomorrow's Italian elections

Photograph: Paul Hanna/Reuters

Dini shift to help Italy's left

ANDREW GUMBEL
Rome

If the centre-left wins tomorrow's Italian elections, it will be largely due to the outgoing prime minister, Lamberto Dini, who has gone against his conservative political instincts to help prevent Silvio Berlusconi returning to power.

Quite apart from the votes he will garner, Mr Dini's presence has given the centre-left a anchor of respectability. Thanks to his past at the IMF and the Bank of Italy, and his record as a prudent fiscal manager in government, Mr Dini has the confidence of the financial markets and Italy's EU partners. He is also light-years away from the left's communist tradition, which still scares many voters.

But what is he really up to? Has he joined the left in an ideological change of heart, or is he just using them in a longer-term plan to replace Mr Berlusconi as leader of the right?

Members of the mainstream left are terrified they are about to be betrayed. If tomorrow's result is inconclusive, they fear Mr Dini might be tempted to take away seats the centre-left has offered him and try to form a separate governing coalition supported by centrists and disenchanted Berlusconi acolytes. It is a fear that Mr Dini and his

newly founded political party, Rinnovamento Italiano, have tried to dispel. "It is a very complex situation, and much will depend on the outcome of the vote," said Mario D'Urso, junior minister for foreign trade in Mr Dini's government and a candidate for the Senate.

In an interview with the *Independent*, Mr Dini said that the centre-left was "the only viable alliance for this election and for the next government". But he indicated that in future he would be willing to govern with "whoever displays the best leadership" for Italy.

Although not a candidate at the last elections, Mr Dini joined the Berlusconi government as treasury minister in a programme to purge Italy of its statist past and create a Thatcherite free-market economy. He now rejects the right-wing label, calling himself a centrist.

On becoming prime minister, he did not actively seek alliances with the left but was given no alternative when Mr Berlusconi unexpectedly turned against him. Since then, Mr Dini's disenchantment has been less with the right than with the personalities of Mr Berlusconi and his reformed neo-fascist ally, Gianfranco Fini.

Mr D'Urso, a former president of the merchant bank Lehman Brothers, said the

prime reason for Mr Dini's entry into politics was to protect the interests of the financial markets. Certainly, Mr Dini's dealing with the leadership of the so-called "Olive Tree" coalition have been calculating rather than genuinely warm; so successful was he in negotiating safe seats into which to parachute his candidates that he ended up with two more than he could fill.

One of the 38 sitting parliamentarians deselected to make room for the Dini bandwagon, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he and his friends felt like "lambs to the slaughter", obliged to support candidates they dislike for whom they have now sacrificed their careers.

Allowing for upsets, Mr Dini can count on around 35 parliamentarians in the first-past-the-post part of Italy's hybrid electoral system, plus a handful more if he jumps the 4 per cent barrier required to win seats in the proportional part of the contest. That will almost certainly make him the pivot upon which any future government must rest.

"If he doesn't betray us now, he almost certainly will in the future," said one left-wing politician, also requesting anonymity. "We just have to hope it will be later rather than sooner."

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Time running out for India's Machiavelli

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

The Indian Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao, is more noted for his patrician gulle than his ability to electrify crowds. Gnomish, balding, and with facial expressions that run the full range from a scowl to a frown, Mr Rao, 74, is not the man to singlehandedly wrest another victory for his Congress party in the upcoming general elections.

With Indians going to polls on 27 April, 2 May and 7 May, the Congress party - which has ruled India for all but four years since independence in 1947 - is headed for a disastrously poor showing, according to forecasts. If Congress, as expected, fails to win a majority in parliament, blame for the party's poor performance will fall directly on Mr Rao.

Not only is he a lacklustre campaigner, but his own party-men accuse him of being miserly with his power and party tickets. Some of the party's chief figures, such as the ex-cabinet ministers Madhavrao Scindia and P Chidambaram, are in open revolt against him, while others are sabotaging Mr Rao's candidates on the sly. It is not the way to win an election. Atal Behari Vajpayee, leader of the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), recently chorled: "It looks like Congress is crumbling."

Some Congress parliamentary candidates have even warned their party headquarters in Delhi to direct them away from their constituencies where they are campaigning. Usually, Indian political rallies are a carnival razzmatazz of music, lyrical speeches, heaps of rice biryani, and colourful banners. They attract tens of thousands of supporters. But Mr Rao's outings so far have been dull affairs: in the Congress stronghold of Haryana state, he drew only 4,000 people. During the party's main rally at Old Delhi's Red Fort on 28 March,

the crowd began drifting away 10 minutes into his speech. In contrast, the leftist Janata Dal drums up support in Bihar by having dwarves go into the villages with green parrots that have been trained to squawk campaign slogans.

When Mr Rao agreed to an election pact with a ruling regional party in Tamil Nadu, his own partymen in the southern state turned against him. They slapped around a cardboard figure of the unsmiling Mr Rao with their sandals, urinated on the cut-out, doused it in kerosene, and set it ablaze, shouting: "The betrayer has been annihilated!"

Events are spinning out of control for Mr Rao, widely regarded by friends and enemies alike as a wily manipulator, a Machiavelli of the sub-continent. Opinion polls show the Congress's majority in the 545-seat Lok Sabha parliament could be chiselled away by the Hindu nationalists who are expected to post gains in the key states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. The National Front may conquer the Ganges plain states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal as well as Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Regional parties are expected to do well in Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Cuts on campaign spending have also diminished the Congress party's natural advantage of being an incumbent, able to dole out a new irrigation canal here, a school or hospital there, to win votes.

In his home state of Andhra Pradesh, Mr Rao is so unsure of winning his constituency race that he is also campaigning for a safe Congress seat in nearby Orissa. With mutiny breaking out inside Congress, many Indians laugh away Mr Rao's campaign slogan of "stability".

But the reforms which Mr Rao has embarked on during his five years in office did jump-start India's moribund economy. The country's economic growth is

now more than 6 per cent and foreign investment is pouring in. Some polls place him slightly ahead of the BJP's Mr Vajpayee as the man most Indians want to see become the next prime minister.

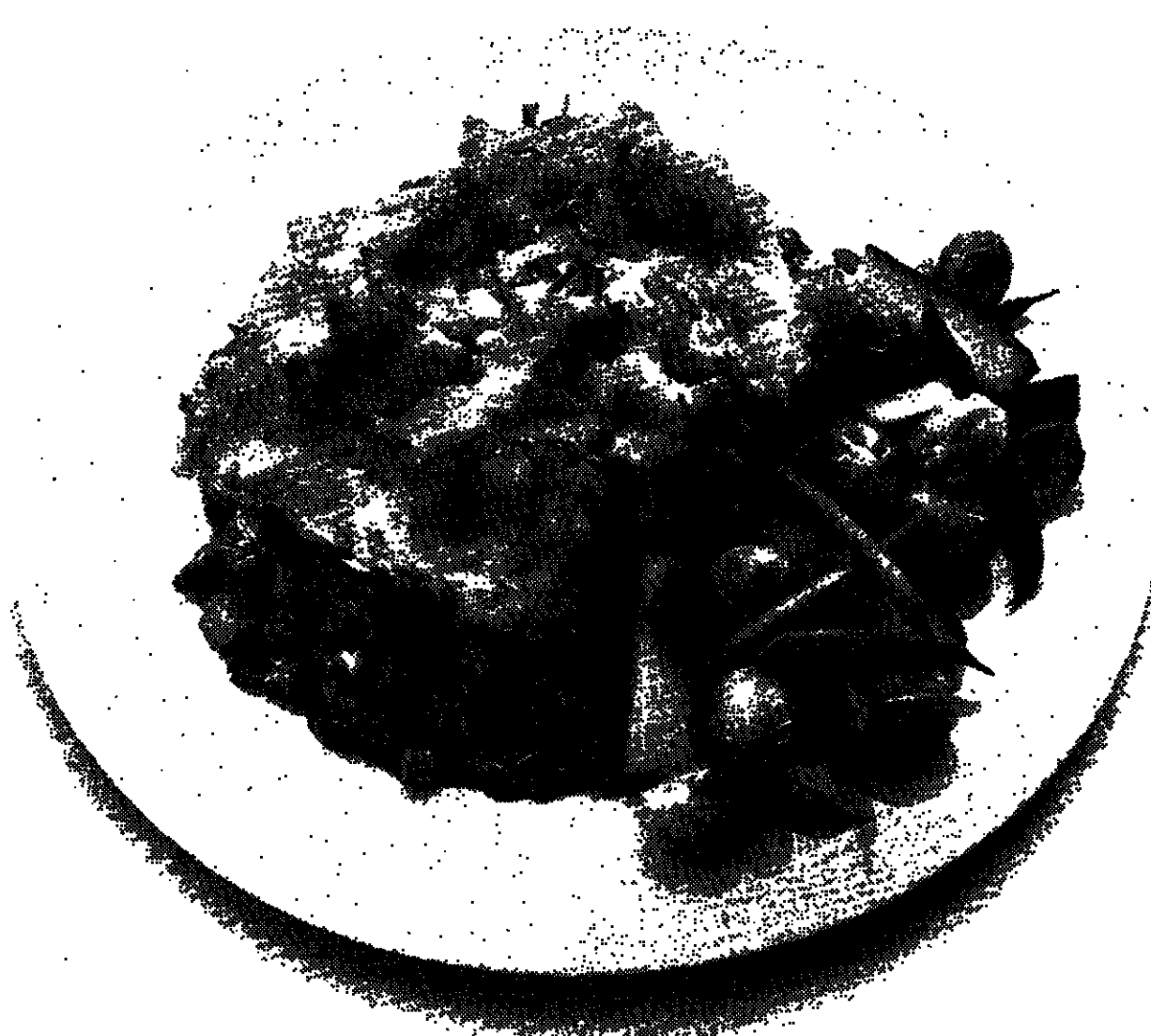
Mr Rao is more at ease deal-making in his air-conditioned New Delhi mansion than out in the sizzling 98 degree heat and dust of the campaign trail. He may be calculating that even if his party does not win a majority, neither will the BJP nor the National Front. He might just finesse his way into being prime minister of a coalition government. Otherwise, he will be cast out, and reviled as the man who presided over the Congress party's demise.



Poll fever: An election poster in New Delhi. Voting starts next Saturday and is spread over 3 days

Photograph: Kamal Kishore / Reuters

**Some people
have been making
a meal of
British beef lately.**



Spaniards take an educated look at the art of chatting-up

ELIZABETH NASH
Madrid

You would imagine that young people in the land of Don Juan would need little instruction on how to pick up members of the opposite sex. Spain's opportunities for sexual contact are legendary.

This is the nation that invented the *piropo* - a man's hissed compliment, poetic rather than lewd, to a woman as she passes him in the street.

Why then, does a sex professor deem it necessary to supplement what comes naturally with a university course entitled "I want to pick you up"? A two-month course on establishing sexual relations between young couples starts next week at the Public University of Navarra in Pamplona.

The course is run by Jose Luis Garcia, a clinical psychologist and sexology specialist, who insists its purpose is absolutely serious. "Young people don't talk about sexuality amongst themselves, they don't talk about contraception. Very few parents talk about these things, and there is in effect no sexual education in schools," he said.

yesterday. In 18 years as a clinical psychologist, Dr Garcia has seen countless youngsters in their teens and early twenties suffering from problems of sexual relationships, inability to communicate and the pain of breaking up.

The course will cover, for example, how a couple can rekindle desire if they reach a stage of sexual monotony. Dr Garcia proposes talking, watching an erotic film, or finding a new place for the sexual act.

He urges young people to "express frankly their sexual desires" which includes the following advice to the person making the first move: "Don't get drunk, don't resort to elaborate deceptions, be frank and open."

Not much role then for the old *piropo*, which anyway is not what it was. The days when someone might shadow your steps murmuring "Your eye-lashes are so long they could tie up my swollen heart and prevent it bursting with love for you," have given way to the all-purpose "*Guapa!*" (beautiful).

Dr Garcia's seminar will not help towards a degree. It is an optional course - extra-curricular activity, you might say.

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obituaries / gazette

Kalim Siddiqui

The year 1989 has come to stand as something of a watershed in the history of Muslims in Britain. The Rushdie affair, with the burning of *The Satanic Verses* in Bradford in January and then Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* in February, also made it a watershed year for Kalim Siddiqui, who died on Thursday while attending a conference in South Africa.

Siddiqui's notoriety rests on his prompt support for the Iranian death sentence on Salman Rushdie. It was wise of the authorities at the time not to fall for the temptation of charging him with incitement to murder. Many other observers, especially in the media, have tended to be less wise. Many of the initiatives taken by Kalim Siddiqui in the last decade have been considered and purposeful.

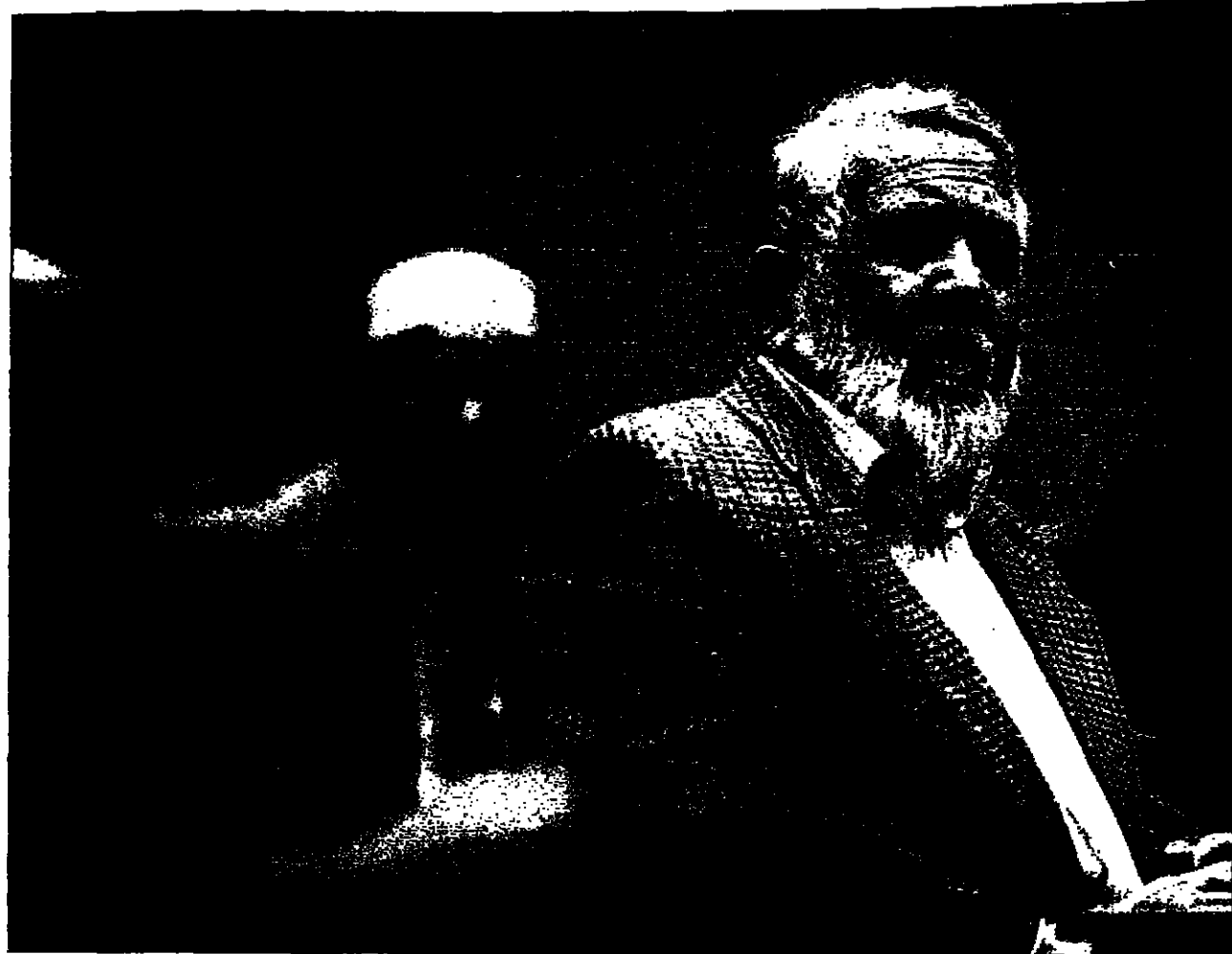
Siddiqui was of a generation of Indian Muslims marked by the clashes in the run-up to Independence in 1947, when he was among the many thousands who moved to Pakistan. In the early 1950s he was in the first phase of significant immigration to Britain from the Indian subcontinent. He went into journalism and worked for the *Guardian* as a writer and sub-editor from 1949 until 1972. It was during this time that he gained his PhD from London University. He left to found the Muslim Institute, one of the earliest Muslim organisations in Britain.

It was at the institute that he increasingly vocally identified himself with the present "Islamic Movement". This was a loose network of Muslim activists drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and including both Sunnis and Shias from around the world. The movement saw the international scene as moving towards an open clash between a "crusading" West bent on continuing and consolidating its dominance over an Islamic world which was less and less prepared

to accept such domination. It was the mirror image of the "clash of civilisations" scenario more than two decades before Professor Samuel Huntington named it.

The view may have been simplistic but it was one which received enormous encouragement in the following decade. As Kalim Siddiqui never failed to remind us, Islam was victorious in the revolution in Iran in 1979, it defeated the Soviets in Afghanistan and the Israelis in Lebanon. At the same time, however, the coherence of the Islamic Movement, in so far as it ever was a movement, began to weaken under internal contradictions as the Islamic revolution turned out to be often more Iranian and Shia than inclusively Islamic. After 1979 Siddiqui made himself the spokesman in Britain of the revolutionary Islam of Iran - and it was widely assumed that during the 1980s his main source of funding was Tehran.

In the late 1980s he began to turn his attention more towards the Muslim situation in Britain. This was a time when the children of the immigrants were beginning to come out of school and enter higher education and professional training in large numbers. They did not agree with their parents' way of life and understandings of Islam which they considered did not work in their new environment. They were looking for leadership and inspiration at a time when they were also becoming conscious of the racism and discrimination with which wider society was responding to them. It was these young people who were mobilised against Salman Rushdie in 1989 in Britain and the first headscarf affair in France later the same year. When Kalim Siddiqui issued his Muslim Manifesto in July 1990, these were the people he regarded as his audience. He had little regard for the traditional leaders; they were caught up in the petty agendas of clan,



A mastery understanding of how to manipulate the media: Siddiqui at the Muslim Parliament last month. Photograph: Kalpesh Lathiga

caste, sect and region, if they were not beholden to foreign powers. He was consistent in attacking the Saudis until the end, when he expressed his support for the Saudi dissident Mohamed al-Masari.

The Manifesto was his programme for the Muslim Parliament, which was set up in 1991. His public persona was now being established. In the press conference announcing the Manifesto, Siddiqui was at his most eloquent - and manipulative. He goaded the press with extreme statements about settling up a separate government for Muslims in Britain. The reaction of the *Daily Express* was typical, with the headline "Inflaming the Passions for the Love of Allah". The Muslim "citizenship" or a structure of Muslim local and national government. He sailed close to the legal wind when he started collecting money for "arms for Bosnia".

reaction of many younger Muslims was on the lines of: here is someone who expresses our frustrations, and if the papers attack him he must have something going for him. Someone once suggested that Kalim Siddiqui saw the press as his main recruiting agent.

The Muslim Parliament drew attention far beyond its standing in the community. Its members were selected by Siddiqui and a small circle around him. It was dismissed by the large majority of Muslim groups, locally and nationally, as an annoying irrelevance. Some of his pronouncements to or on behalf of the parliament drew metaphorical groans of despair from his fellow believers, as when he called for a special release prisoner of war, and Malet uses him throughout *Les Nouveaux Mystères de Paris* (which start in 1954 in *Le Soleil* and *Le Monde*).

But Siddiqui also drew attention to a number of areas of concern to the Muslim community, to which the traditional leadership had not given as much attention as they might have. Through the parliament he proposed Muslim "tutorial colleges" to counteract the generally poor educational performance of Muslim children in schools. He wanted youth advice groups and talked about the need for women's support groups. The parliament tried to set up a charity fund to collect the obligatory alms, *zakah*, which still today tend to contribute to other parts of the world rather than the community in Britain.

It was rumoured in the early 1990s that the Iranian support had fallen away, and Siddiqui's recently reiterated support for the *fatwa* on Salman Rushdie clearly irritated the Iranian government. Lack of funding was quickly seen as one of the main motivations behind the parliament's establishment of a Halal Food Authority. This was to certify the religious correctness of meat being sold by Muslim butchers, at a price per pound. Again, he had identified a sore point.

Kalim Siddiqui was not an organisation man. Having set up the parliament, he did not always get his way there. He made his mark through a mastery understanding of how to manipulate the media. His influence lay in forcing agendas on to others. The Muslim organisations did not like him, but they had to take notice of him.

Jorgen S. Nielsen

Léo Malet

For the French, who hold low culture in high esteem and consider comic books - graphic novels - the eighth (or perhaps the ninth) art, crime fiction is a serious genre. And being French, they relish all the more the paradox that Léo Malet, not a well-known practitioner of the form outside France, but within the country one of the best loved, never could take it seriously.

He came to it late and by accident, and he never completed his planned great cycle of detective stories, *Les Nouveaux Mystères de Paris* ("The New Mysteries of Paris") which were to include a novel set in each of the 20 *arrondissements* of Paris. He managed 15 but then gave up, out of sheer laziness. After all, he had only started for the money, and his detective novels were selling steadily, regularly reprinted, and translated: Pan brought out paperbacks in English in 1991.

Léo Malet had originally wanted to be a singer, and in his early teens he ran away from the southern town of Montpellier to

the low-life Paris of Montmartre cabarets that Aristide Bruant had sung about before him, and whose tradition Georges Brassens (another southerner) perpetuated. Malet wasn't so lucky, or so talented, and he scraped a desperate hand-to-mouth existence in the sordid Paris of the poor without the solace of being able to romanticise it in song.

He moved to poetry and Surrealism, and the titles of his two poetry collections, *Ne pas voir plus loin que le bout de son nez* ("Seeing No Further Than the End of Your Nose") (1936) and *L'arbre comme cadavre* ("The Tree Like a Corpse") (1937), give some idea of the bitterness and rage that found fuller expression in his "Black Trilogy" of novels: *La Vie est dégoûtante* ("Life is Lousy") (1948), *Le Soleil n'est pas pour nous* ("The Sun is Not for Us") (1949), *Sueur aux tripres* ("Gut Sweat") (1969); their publishing history obscures their roots in the 1930s. The expedients, the despair, the danger, and the brief fierce joys of young life and love in crumbling

stinking tenements down dark alleys come to life vividly, unforgettable and sickeningly. Malet was setting out to shock, and the final derivative challenge of his young hero as the police open fire on him, "Am for the sex", is also Malet's sentiment.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Malet's anarchism got him thrown into gaol by the French, only to be captured by the Germans soon after his release. Back in occupied Paris where there was no butter and bread was strictly rationed, he turned to bread-and-butter writing: historical romances as Omer, Refrèges, reportedly American crime fiction as Léo Latimer or Frank Harding, Johnny Metal, the hard-boiled whisky-soaked New York reporter of the Harding novels, but the novels sweep along quite well; Malet even allows himself (in *Affaire double*, 1948) the treat of bringing this anagrammatic hero from his pastiche America for a holiday in a pastiche Paris littered with

personal allusions and private jokes.

His French private detective Nestor Burma is a hero of more substance. He is hard-drinking, pipe-smoking, ebullient and irrepressible; his agency is called *Fiat Lux*, and he knocks mysteries out cold, though it usually takes a few knocks to his own head to clear his thinking. Burma first appears in *120 rue de la Gare* (1943), where like Malet he is a roomy, released prisoner of war, and Malet uses him throughout *Les Nouveaux Mystères de Paris* (which start in 1954 in *Le Soleil* and *Le Monde*).

In spite of the title, Malet's detective fiction is relatively tame. The real echoes of Eugene Sue's 19th-century *Mystères de Paris*, set in the Paris underworld, are found in his *Black Trilogy*. But the Paris he takes us through has a real sense of place, and the truculence of his detective mouthpiece asserts an aggressively French identity. French crime fiction had come



Malet: crime fiction as entertainment. Photograph: Rex Features

under the sway of the American hard-boiled school. Malet gave it ironic edge and a French voice. Burma is caustic, outspoken, derisive, and behind the murder, mystery and corruption, Malet is quite obviously having fun: death is serious, crime fiction is entertainment.

He abandoned the series in 1959 and the 17th *arrondissement*: the linking thread, a guided tour of Paris for anti-tourists, is a joke that wore thin for its author, but it still keeps its at-

traction for the readers. A few more Nestor Burma novels followed as the semi-retired Léo Malet was republished and rediscovered, glimpsed in some film adaptations of his work (in 1983, he covered the Cannes Film Festival for *Le Matin de Paris*, a Paris newspaper), and revered like an old literary lion.

Stephen F. Norello

Léo Malet, writer: born Montpellier 7 March 1909; died Paris 3 March 1996.

Evidence for a belief in a loving God

I have just spent a holiday at a conference on the scientific study of consciousness. My head feels as if it had been stuffed with rocks. There is such an enormous amount now known about the workings of our brains, and it only serves to illuminate how much greater is the extent of our ignorance. Most of the emerging science of consciousness is more or less explicitly anti-religious. John Searle, a noted American philosopher who likes to put away disputed points with the dispatch and brutality of John McEnroe, told an audience of scientists and theologians discussing these matters in Cambridge last autumn: "When the brain goes, I go."

His attitude was certainly the norm at the much bigger conference in Tucson, Arizona, where I was last week. Dualism, which would imply that there was some kind of separate soul-stuff or spirit-stuff, distinguishable from matter, in which our real selves reside, has been thoroughly rejected by both science and philosophy. Even those who believe that consciousness is a fundamental characteristic of the world see it as an irreducible aspect of the universe and not as a separate quickening principle (as in the book of Genesis, for example). The links between body and personality are simply too intricate for us to suppose that personality is something superimposed on the brain, rather than something that grows there.

This is bad news for much traditional religion. The basic assumption among consciousness researchers is one of sturdy atheism, perhaps most vigorously expressed by Dan Dennett, the author of the books *Consciousness Explained* and *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, who is also a notable prophet of artificial intelligence. Yet two themes running through the conference

faith & reason

Does modern science teach us anything about the religious impulse? Andrew Brown has been attending a conference in Tucson, Arizona, on the study of consciousness.

made me suspect that the religious impulse is not easily stamped out by factual knowledge.

The first touches on a taboo subject in America at the moment. Even alcohol is a suspect pleasure there now, let alone the more exotic drugs which everyone was scarfing down 30 or 40 years ago. Yet an extraordinary number of the philosophers, doctors and psychologists at the conference first had their attention turned towards consciousness direction by LSD. One man now employed by a most respectable American university confessed that he had been the first person ever arrested in California for dealing LSD after it became illegal. These people had all, one way or another, been confronted with the brute fact of consciousness: the fact that we live in our minds and cannot escape into a pure objectivity, as it was one of the myths of the Fifties that we could.

A development of this theme was the extraordinary reverence given to Eastern religious practices. This was not just the case on the fringe, though the conference's fringe of cranks was as fluffy and tangled

as anyone could hope. But even in the main sessions there was a large contingent of people who could be described as materialists who meditate, among them several conference speakers. Some of these people had adopted the quasi-religious adoration of DNA popularised by Richard Dawkins, but most of them just seemed able to hold in their minds a belief in strict materialism alongside a faith in enlightenment, pure content-free consciousness, without any apparent discomfort. This seems to me a remarkable tribute to the geometry of the human brain.

On the other hand the Buddhist materialists are undoubtedly right to hold their views from a phenomenological point of view. They experience the world as deterministic and regulated by scientific laws; they also experience the clear light of nothingness. Brain science teaches us that neither experience can be raw, so to say. Both must have been the product of innumerable unconscious transductions and transformations. Why should our knowledge of the external world, which grows more fallible the more we look at it, be viewed as intrinsically more authoritative or reliable than our knowledge of the internal world, from which religious belief arises and is nourished?

This is a question that suggests that religion of some sort is built into the structure of the human mind. There is even some evidence that a belief in a loving God may be. Certainly, all our intellectual faculties appear only after the emotional wiring is in place in the brain; and if those connections do not develop properly, we get intellectually crippling diseases like autism. It would appear that there is some neurological warrant for a belief that love really is the ground of our being.

Sir William Wilkinson

William Wilkinson was notable in achieving a reputation as a nature conservationist and a principled businessman. His enthusiasm developed young and lasted his life; so too did his determination to put moral conviction and public service before private gain.

He was the son of Denys and Gillian Wilkinson, Denys an inspirational Eton master and Gillian a distinguished classical scholar who taught at London University. William Wilkinson inherited an interest in things classical and a love of country pursuits and in particular bird-watching, fostered by holidays at the family home in the Gower Peninsula.

He was born in 1912 and educated at St George's Choir School in Windsor and in 1945 he obtained an Eton scholarship. His career at Eton was happy and well-rounded: he ended as President of Pop with a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge. Indeed, with the width of his interests and his strong idealism, he was near to being Robert Birley's paragon schoolboy.

A strange illness caused by painting himself up for a fancy dress party disqualified him from National Service, and he went up to Cambridge in 1951 where he again filled each day to overflowing. On the one hand he was to make a rewarding wildlife expedition to Spitzbergen; on the other, he lived a hectic social life that at one stage left him sick from overdoses of *Alka-Seltzer*. Academic respectability was only preserved with small-hours revision.

His first employment was with Borax Consolidated, and he soon made his mark: "It was bad enough putting up with William's extravaganzas at Cambridge, but now the damned boy is earning more than I am," said his irascible but proud and affectionate father. Typically this work was combined with coaching cricket in the East End, and acting as Treasurer for the Eton Mission.

He was posted to Turkey, where he was established with many visitors in a flat commanding the confluence of the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. His job allowed him to travel widely in Turkey, obtaining an exceptional grasp of that country's rich archaeology, as well as helping to found the Ornithological Society of Turkey, which became the Ornithological Society of the Middle East. He was to serve as Chairman and was later Vice-President. His love for Turkey and the Turks was revived on a final holiday in 1995, when William Bey recalled some of his Turkish and charmed all whom he met.

It was in Turkey too that he began his happy marriage to Kate Loudon. Nevertheless, when he became disenchanted with Borax's policy towards Turkey, he felt that he should leave the company. After a short spell with William Brandt, he became in 1970 a director of Lounor. It was not a happy period: travelling in Africa he was infected by TB. Then in 1973, when the boardroom was split, he was one of the so-called Straight Eight and found himself without a job.

Wilkinson was however made a director of Kleinwort Benson, and soon acquired other direc-

torships. But in 1983 he was appointed Chairman of the Nature Conservancy Council, which was intended to be a part-time job and was paid as such. He soon found that he could not give the Nature Conservancy Council the time that he felt it deserved, and in 1985 he consequently resigned from Kleinwort. He strengthened the influence of the council and secured it an increased budget; among its more publicised achievements was the resistance to afforestation of the Flow Country, in Sutherland.

This productive period in Wilkinson's life, in which he was able to provide exhilarating leadership in the environmental field, was interrupted by a serious stroke which occurred in 1988 while he was having a heart bypass operation. He was left with only keyhole vision, a terrible affliction to one who had spent so much of his life in the open air. He became immensely dependent on his wife, needing her support on unfamiliar terrain or when pressed in at a gathering by a crowd he might know but could not see.

Somehow he continued to work and was knighted for his services to conservation in 1989. He vainly resisted the dismantling of the Nature Conservancy



Wilkinson: exhilarating

Council but, when that occurred in 1991, he ended his public employment. The list of voluntary positions which he held continued to grow, and this kept his connection with birds and with the environment. He was president or vice-president of eight organisations, most notably of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, of which he had been a longtime council member. He had also been a council member of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust from 1985 to 1993.

His fortitude in his last years deepened the respect in which his many friends held him. The enjoyment which he had obtained all his life from music, especially opera, was a continued solace. With his deeply held faith and rock-like values, he conquered the occasional attacks of depression. At its close his life would certainly have seemed to him a fortunate one. When his final illness began he was where he would have wished to be, in Gower.

Tim Card

William Henry Naim Wilkinson, businessman and conservationist: born Westminster, Wilshire 22 July 1932; Chairman, Nature Conservancy Council 1983-91; Ki 1989; President, London Wildlife Trust 1992-96; President, British Trust for Ornithology 1993-96; married 1964 Katharina Loudon (one son, two daughters); died 12 April 1996.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

BENNETT: On 17 April, to Sarah and Simon, a son, William Guy, a brother for Tom.

DAVIES: To Sue and Simon Davies, on 24 March 1996, a beautiful girl, Sally Brown. A sister for Harriet.

YOUNG: On 4 April, to Stella and John, a son, Joseph George, a brother for Harry.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Weddings, Anniversaries, etc.) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL. Telephone 0171-293 2811 (answering machine 0171-293 2812) or faxed to 0171-293 2810, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (Funerals, Weddings, etc.) should be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. Please include a daytime telephone number.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

TODAY: The Princess Royal, Princess Alexandra, will attend the Final of the County Championship at Nottingham, Midlands, on 21 April. The Princess Royal, Princess Alexandra, will attend the Final of the County Championship at Nottingham, Midlands, on 21 April. The Princess Royal, Princess Alexandra, will attend the Final of the County Championship at Nottingham, Midlands, on 21 April.

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr Alan Beith MP, 53; Professor Derek Bowett, QC, former President, Queens' College, Cambridge, 69; Mr Ray Brooks, actor, 57; Sir Geoffrey Chappell, former chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, 88; Mr John Eliot Gardiner, conductor, 53; Mr Maurice Guelgelm, racing driver, 33; Mr Jeremy Hayes MP, 43; Mr Paul Heiney, writer and broadcaster, 47; Miss Louise Jameson, actress, 45; Mr Andrew Jasson, former Editor, the Observer, 44; Sir Antony Jay, author and scriptwriter, 66; Mr Eddie Kaulukundis, theatrical producer, 64; Miss Jessica Lange, actress, 47; Mr Nick Lyndhurst, actor, 35; Mr Ryan O'Neal, actor, 55; Mr Roger Pannone, solicitor, and former President of the Law Society of England and Wales, 53; Mr Leslie Phillips, actor, 72; Mr Eric Pickles MP, 44; Sir John Quicke, agriculturist, 74; Mr Richard Rhodes, Headmaster, Rossall School, Lancashire, 54; Mr Christopher Robinson, organist and director of music, St John's College, Cambridge, 60; Mr Peter Snow, broadcaster, 58; Miss Jean Southworth QC, Chairman, Police Discipline Appeals Tribunal, 70; Mr Gerry Steinberg MP, 51; Mr Luther Vandross, soul singer, 45; Air Marshal Sir Richard Wakeford, 74; Mr Henry Wrong, Director, European Airy Foundation, 66.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Pietro Aretino, satirist, 1492; Adolf Hitler, dictator, 1889; Harold Lloyd, film comedian, 1893; Joan Miró, painter, 1893; Sir Donald Wolf, actor-manager, 1902; Deaths: Antonio (Canale) Canale, painter, 1768; Abraham (Brant) Stoker, theatre manager and author of *Dracula*, 1912; William Sanson, author, 1976. On this day: Jacques Cartier, navigator, reached the coast of Labrador, 1534; Oliver Cromwell dissolved the Long Parliament, 1653; the Siege of London-derry began, 1689; Captain James Cook discovered New South Wales, 1770; the electron microscope was first demonstrated, 1940; Soviet troops entered Berlin, 1945; Pierre Trudeau became Prime Minister of Canada, 1968; President Richard Nixon announced that 150,000 troops would be withdrawn from Vietnam, 1970. Today is the Feast Day of St Agnes of Montepulciano, St Caecilia, St Hildegard, St Marcellinus of Embrun, St Marcellus of Auxerre and St Peter of Verona.

Lectures

Tate Gallery: Lawrence Bradbury, "Cézanne in England", 1pm. Anna Guezmar Robins, "Cézanne and England", 3.30pm. National Portrait Gallery: Valerie Holtz, "Varieties of Celebrity in the 20th Century", 3pm. TOMORROW: Tate Gallery: Lawrence Bradbury, "Model Painters", 2.30pm. National Portrait Gallery: Mary Comany, "Family Group Portraits, 1590-1800", 3pm.

0171 293 2811

Sir William Wilkinson

Weekend

Is there life after Take That?

Gary Barlow, teen idol (retired)
page 3



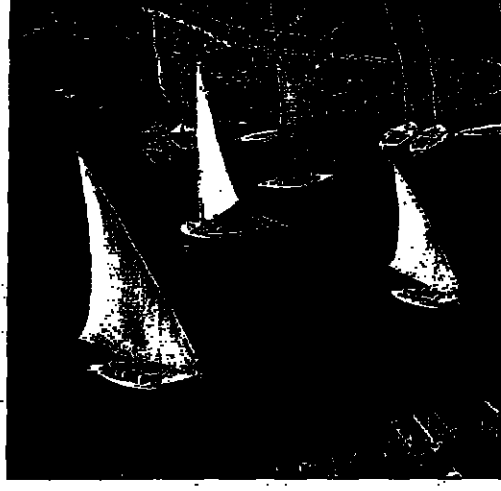
INSIDE STORIES



5 Finding a headstone for the grave of her artist husband was the most difficult decision of Sue Utton's life. She was certain that the grave near the churchyard yew tree was where her husband would have been happy to be laid to rest, but she was faced with finding a headstone that he would also have liked...



6 Hollywood has discovered a promising new scriptwriter who doesn't demand mega-millions for a screenplay or throw artistic temper tantrums when his words are cut or meddled with. And his work not only guarantees an audience but attracts many of the world's leading actors for well below their usual fee



19 Tourism collided fatally with terrorism this week when gunmen massacred 18 Greek pilgrims outside a hotel in Cairo. Long after the bodies of the victims have been flown back to their families, Egypt will be paying the price of the slaughter. With every such tragedy, the frontiers of fear shift in our perceptions



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| INTERVIEW.....3 | BOOKS.....9-11 | TRAVEL.....14-19 | MONEY.....22-25 | TODAY.....26 |
| SHOPPING.....4-5 | GARDENING.....12 | PROPERTY.....20 | GOING OUT.....26 | SUNDAY.....27 |

picture story



Cistercians, an order set up as an off-shoot of the Benedictines in 1098, are distinguished by their appetite for communal life. The General Vatican Council reforms of the Sixties gave their late 20th-century successors more flexibility in the way they managed their lifestyle



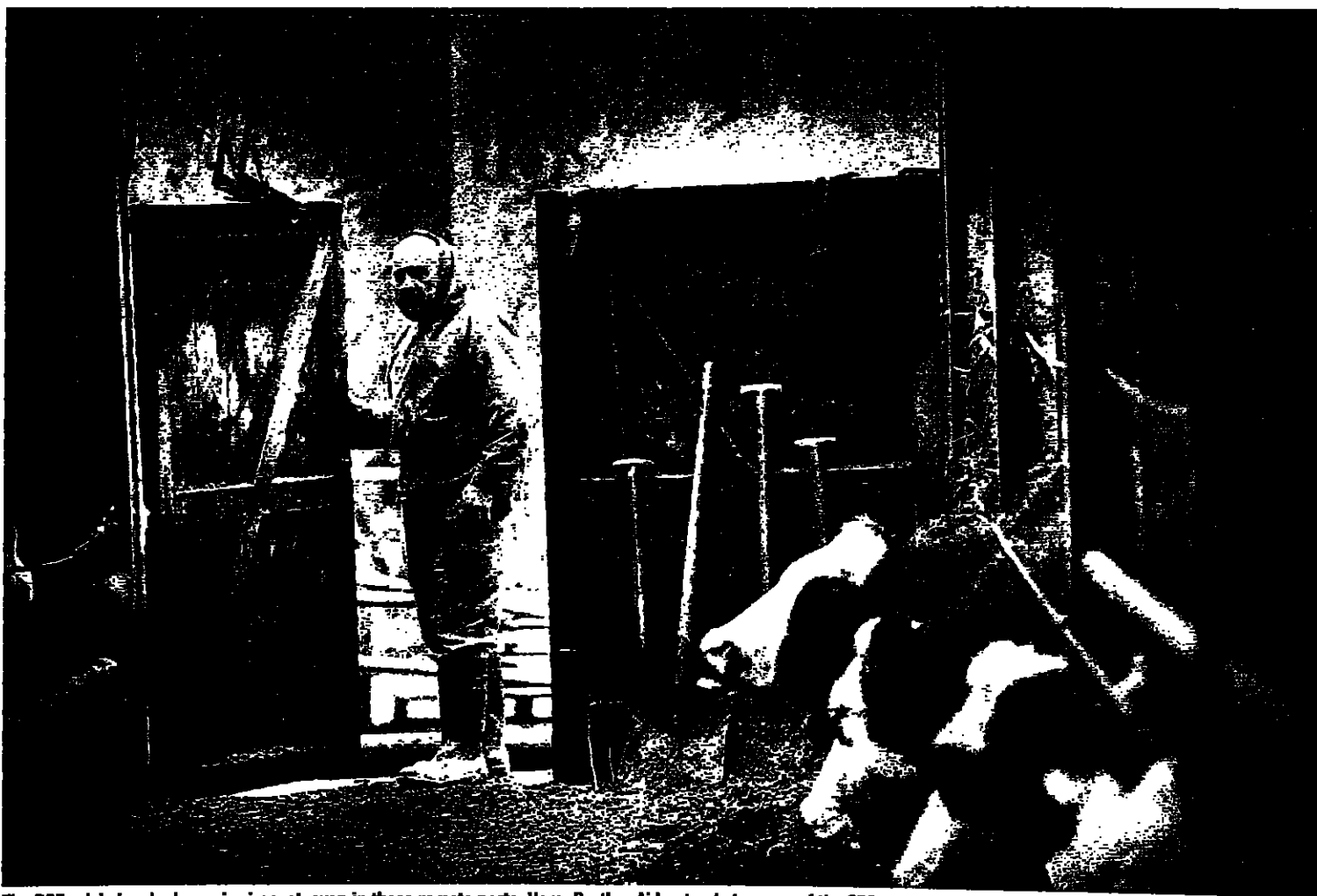
Above: Benediction at 3.30am (the abbot Donald McGlynn stands on the left). Right: Father Mark does the laundry for the rest of the order. Frugality sits side by side with small luxuries — the monks have electricity, running water, their own computer and printing press



Monks putting on their robes before going into chapel for benediction. This is the first in the daily seven-part prayer cycle that ends with vespers and compline

3AM: RISE AND SHINE

It's 50 years since a group of Cistercian monks came over from Ireland to found an order at Sancta Maria Abbey in Nunraw, East Lothian. The anniversary should be a cause for celebration, but the monks' centuries-old way of life is threatened with extinction not just by dwindling numbers, but by a more immediate modern-day problem — BSE. Photographs by Colin McPherson



The BSE crisis has had a major impact, even in these remote parts. Here, Brother Aidan tends to some of the 250 cattle that are relied upon to bring in vital revenue. Despite the panic in the farming community about the collapse of the beef trade, the monks are not too concerned. They believe that whatever happens, God will provide



Left: Before mass. The new abbey, where the monks live and worship, was built in the late 1960s; the old abbey, which dates back many centuries, is now used as a guesthouse and retreat. BSE aside, the order is in decline, finding it difficult to recruit new members. Where once there were 70 monks here, now the number has fallen to just 16

Been there, done That



NORMAN WATSON, ARENA

Gary Barlow woke up one day and discovered he was no longer the lead singer of Britain's most drooled-over teenie-pop idols. How do you Take That? By Giles Smith

Gary Barlow, who is eating a Kit-Kat, says, "I was always a bit of an afterthought in Take That. I was always the last one the stylist bought clothes for because I wasn't interested in clothes and I never looked that good when I was in them. I was always the fat, white one everyone pushed to one side so they could get a shot of Mark and Robbie. The only thing I could shout and wave my arms about was the music. I could say: 'Here - listen to this. This is my music.'"

Now on his own, Gary Barlow confronts the predicament faced by any pop star whose career has opened to the sound of screaming girls. Count the artists in the last quarter of a century who have graduated with any dignity from the scream school. There's George Michael, who stepped - remade - from the wreckage of Wham! And that's about it. There was, as I recall, precious little public call for new, mature work from Les McKeown of The Bay City Rollers. And Bros, anyone? What hope then, for Gaz from the That?

Except that, all along, it's been made clear to us that if anyone in that fresh-faced, all-dancing combo had a future, it was Gary. He was in Take That, but he wasn't essentially of Take That. He was the podgy one with the unwieldy hair-cuts, but that was OK, because he was the brains. (Unfair on Barlow, all this, who would strike you as a handsome boy in any other context than a photograph of Take That.) And now the end has come.

About the others - Jason, cute Mark, Howard and the chaotic and errant Robbie - we just don't know. Gary thinks they'll be OK, including Robbie. (Gary is very disappointed in Robbie, for reasons we will come to.) But Gary was the lead singer and, more importantly, Gary wrote the songs - "Back For Good", "Babe", "Pray", "A Million Love Songs", a stream of gleamingly booked, radio-friendly ballads and bouncers, the songs of someone, it was readily apparent, gifted beyond his tender years. He's already won two Ivor Novello songwriting awards; this year, to mark the demise of Take That, the Ivor Novello people have decided to give him a bit of Lifetime Achievement award. Gary Barlow is the grand old age of 25.

So how could we not feel confident for Gary? Gary was the talent. Now all he has to do is prove it.

I meet Gary Barlow in a recording studio in west London. It is only a month since Take That announced their dissolution, inducing nationwide sobbing, an item on News At Ten and the installation of helpines for the distressed. The farewell live shows have yet to happen. But already Barlow is at work on his first solo album.

What kind of person do you expect a 25-year-old to be, who is already a multi-millionaire, who has spent the past five years being screamed at all over Europe and Asia, who has, as he puts it, "lived the full pop star thing"? My money was on a braying yob in pricey clobber, whose brain had long since turned to banana daigiri. Gary Barlow is not like this. His eyes are lively, his voice engagingly up-tempo. His accent is undiluted Cheshire. He is charming and courteous. He can be a bit prim but he laughs a lot, including at himself. Within seconds of meeting him, it's difficult not to wish you were his friend.

A story that may help us understand Gary Barlow. At 16 and a nobody, he was ringing up publishers in London and getting appointments to play them his songs. He would travel down from Cheshire on the train, wearing a suit and carrying his cassettes in a briefcase, trying to look like a businessman. For two years, on and off, he tried this and in all that time he got nothing. Worse than nothing. At Rocket Publishing an executive listened to Barlow's material in frozen silence, then stood up, removed the tape from the machine and threw it out of the window. He told Barlow: "Don't ever bring your songs in here again."

And now here's Barlow, some seven or eight years later, retired from the biggest teen band to sweep Britain in more than a decade and plotting the next move in a career which

has been, in many respects, as rigorously pre-planned as a military strike. "In Take That, we always talked about the end," he says. "We always talked about bands like Wham, and The Jam, the ones who cut it when they were right at the top. That's what we had to do: keep it all positive until we could just feel it drifting away a little bit and then - bang."

The bang came after a band meeting this year in which everyone agreed they could sense a slip coming. Barlow describes sitting at the Smash Hits Awards last autumn, watching a succession of boy bands take the stage, "and they all looked like us, and they all danced like us, and they didn't sound any different. I thought, 'We can't be here next year.'"

And after the bang, the solo album - the record with which Barlow either makes that tricky leap from girls' pencil cases to adults' CD players, or doesn't. In the studio, Barlow puts a tape in the machine and plays me the story so far - three tracks, none of them finished. There's a big ballad with, as yet, no drums on. There's a breezy, acoustic-based number called "Open Road" with a penny whistle solo in the middle which may, Barlow says, be the title track. And, closest to completion, there's a huge tune called "Never Knew".

The chorus descends out of a pent-up verse, through fat wedges of harmony vocals. It sounds like George Michael before he became so stiffly caught up in himself. It sounds like George Michael, only slightly more commercial.

In a quiet room at the back of the studio, Gary Barlow tells me he was only 14 when people started telling him he was going to be a star. These were the people who had seen him do his keyboard and vocal routine on the club circuit around his home town in Cheshire: "I Am What I Am", £18 nightly, thank you, God bless.

Barlow's father used to be, according to Gary, "a product manager. Quite well paid - not like a solicitor, but they're scrumpers and savers, my mum and dad. They'll clear out the attic and do boot sales for the next four weeks." Now his parents live in a house he has bought them; Gary has also bought a house for his older brother, Ian, who is a builder and whose Axe Attack albums Gary endured as a child. "I hated him as a youngster," Barlow says, "but we get on so well now. He could be the real upset, forgotten-about brother and he isn't. He's just so proud of what I do."

When he was 10, Barlow's parents bought him a keyboard for Christmas. It was either that or a BMX bike. "I'd been through about three BMXes already and I felt like I wanted to get into music a bit, so I went for the keyboard." Barlow exhausted its repertoire of noises within weeks. His father then cashed in some days off and bought him a fully-fledged home organ. Barlow learned "A Whiter Shade Of Pale" and - when everyone was sick of that - "I Will Survive".

At 12 he was playing weekends in the bar at a Labour club in North Wales. At 14 he had a four-nights-a-week slot worth £120 in a cabaret club. At 16 he left school and worked up his own cabaret act: "I'd do 'The Way You Make Me Feel', Michael Jackson, and do a bit of a routine to it. None of these 40-year-old singers could do that. They'd be out of breath bending to one knee." And by 18, Barlow had

served his apprenticeship and was ready for something else.

"At that time I was quite bitter, bit of a chip on my shoulder, quite bitchy. I'd been on the club scene too long and everyone's very bitchy there: 'Oooh! Have you seen the dress she's wearing?' and all that. I was 18 going on 58."

Barlow remembers exactly where he was when he first heard from Nigel Martin-Smith, the recipient - like so many people in the music business in 1991 - of a Gary Barlow song tape. "I was out the front, washing my car."

Martin-Smith, a pop and fashion agent in his thirties with an office in Manchester, had, as Barlow puts it, "an idea for a band". The band would be about "the comradeship between five nice young people". Martin-Smith showed Barlow a video of New Kids On The Block, the white, American all-teen act. "I'd never heard of them before," Barlow says. "I was out of touch because of playing in the clubs."

Barlow thought it only fair to warn Martin-Smith that he was "crap at dancing". Martin-Smith told him not to worry: he could be the singer in the middle and everything would be structured around him. "He told me, 'It's too early for you to be a solo artist. It would be better to have a foil around you and eventually leave the band.'"

Barlow gave up working, sold his car and went on the dole. "We all had jobs we jacked in: Jason, painting and decorating; Howard, car-spraying; Mark was a teaboy at Strawberry Studios." Barlow already knew Mark. Martin-Smith introduced them both to the other two.

After a while, Martin-Smith appeared with a photograph and said he was thinking about a fifth member. "This picture looked like a 14-year-old schoolkid, and I was a bit unsure," Barlow says. "The manager said, 'His name's Robbie and he's got a really good voice.' He was one of those precocious schoolkids who danced outrageously and was dead cheeky, but quite a likeable young lad."

Martin-Smith blagged his confection a spot on Sky TV and then hawked the video around the record companies. When there were no takers, Martin-Smith remortgaged his house and, late in 1991, released the first Take That single, "Do What U Like", on his own label. "We got loads of teenage press," Barlow says. "There were all these faceless rave acts in the charts and suddenly it was, like, 'Shit, here comes a band, and they're not bad looking. Give them the front cover.'"

Soon, Take That had a record deal with RCA and Barlow had a publishing deal with Virgin. "And all of a sudden there was £150,000 in my bank account." To push "It Only Takes a Minute" into the Top 20 in 1992, Martin-Smith sent Take That on a nationwide tour of schools, scaling their fate as teen-fodder.

"We had a great time. We were all in B&Bs. We'd get to our room and there'd be five single beds. I'd never had friends like these before. I hadn't been used to making sacrifices. I was quite a bold, selfish person at that time. And there was a bit of snobbery as well, because I was the musical one. But I grew to love these four people. I can understand why girls love Mark so much they can't go to sleep

at night. I love Mark. He's one of the nicest people I know. I love Howard: he's probably my best friend in the band. I love Jason. And I loved Robbie when he was Robbie."

Ah, yes: Robbie Williams. Robbie, the spike-cropped maverick who spoiled the game plan by leaving Take That in July last year and has done little since but be in conspicuous places, in a most un-Take That fashion.

"I'm disappointed in Robbie," Barlow says, looking sombre now and speaking gently. "He's taken a different road from us. I can't say it's wrong because I don't know where he's at, really. A lot of the things he's said have hurt us all - that he was a prisoner in Take That, that none of us are close friends, that we've never been friends. It's complete rubbish. We're as close and we've always been close."

Barlow reckons Take That knew they were losing Robbie long before he finally told them he wanted to go. He noticed how Robbie was developing "a following of really funny people, not the sort of people we'd ever been friends with really - real trendies". He also saw how "every other week he'd be in the paper, coming out of a club with a girl on his arm. And it wasn't our image, that. We said to Robbie: 'Cool it, Rob. Be a bit more shady about it.' But Robbie was on a complete rebellion at this point. It was all coming to a head round about the time of Glastonbury in June last year, when we heard he'd been on the stage with Oasis. That felt shocking at the time."

According to Barlow, shortly after Glastonbury, Robbie told the band at a meeting he was going to leave in six months. The group told him they would rather he didn't leave at all, but that if he was set on it, they would prefer that he left immediately. "And Rob says, 'Right then, I'll go now.' And off he walked."

Take That survived happily as a four-piece for another six months. Their first concerts without Robbie were received with undiminished rapture. "I think Robbie was convinced that we'd never do it," Barlow says. "That's when a bitterness started setting in. I don't feel a bitterness towards Robbie, though. I think he's just involved with the wrong sort of people. He should get his act together."

When it gets to 7pm, Barlow leaves his producer and engineers fiddling and we go for a Japanese meal (Barlow's favourite). We take Barlow's black S-class Mercedes, which is the size of a tank. As we drive, Barlow tells me about the flat he rents when he's in London - a high-security place with views across the Thames. He's paranoid about the rabidoids discovering it, because then he would have to put up net curtains, which would spoil the view.

Mostly he likes the attention, but sometimes it troubles him. "I've seen these people deal with their fame so well. We've had the first class hotels, the limos. We've had the girls in the mini skirts at the bar waiting. We've had endless amounts of people offering us free drugs. And not one of us has come out of it affected by it. None of us has a drink problem, none of us has a drug problem. And because we've stopped at the top, we've all got a chance to do our own things now."

Barlow about wanting to settle down "within the next two years". He's had a girlfriend now for some seven months: He says he is very serious about her and that they discuss things, and he's not used to that. "I don't think I ever communicated with any of my girlfriends before. I don't remember even having a decent chat with any of them."

"People say, 'You'll miss Take That because you're addicted to the adulation.' But I think I can honestly say, if I didn't have an audience again, I wouldn't crave it. I'd crave not being able to play a keyboard, but not a screaming audience. I really have had enough of the hysteria. I'm looking forward to having a family and living in the houses I've bought and driving the cars I've bought. And I'm looking forward to showing people what I can do. Because I don't think they've seen half of it."

This is an edited version of a piece that appears in this month's 'Arena' magazine

A memorial needn't be set in stone

When Sue Utton's husband died, she wanted more than an 'off-the-peg' memorial headstone... By Clive Fewins



Above: Sue Utton with her husband's grave; below: a selection of memorials by artists

Finding a headstone for the grave of her artist husband, who died of cancer in 1990 at the age of 48, was the most difficult purchase of Sue Utton's life. She was certain that the grave near the churchyard yew tree was where her husband would have been happy to be laid to rest, but was faced with trying to find a headstone that he would also have liked.

"It was a daunting task. I knew I had to do something special but it was completely new territory for me," says Mrs Utton, 41. "Fortunately, a friend had seen an article about Memorials By Artists, a service for bereaved people seeking headstones that are more personal than those provided by most monumental masons. I got in touch with the director, Harriet Frazer, and, after one false start, found a man who seemed wholly sympathetic and attuned to what I wanted."

Mrs Utton's husband had been an admirer of the work of the late Victorian artist and sculptor Alfred Gilbert. She was able to discuss the shape of the stone and the bas-relief detailing with Martin Jennings, a letter-cutter and sculptor, who went through some of her late husband's books on Gilbert and came up with an abstract design that captured the flavour of the artist's work. She approved the design and Jennings cut and installed the stone in 1992.

"I was hugely satisfied," Mrs Utton says. "At the time I was conscious of cost, but I calculated that the price was barely more than half as much again as a standard stone from the memorial mason's catalogue. My view was that this was a gift to my late husband that was to last a long time. I'm sure I was right."

The cost of commissioning a one-off headstone from an artist mason starts at around £1,200, compared with £500 for a standard headstone in native stone from a monumental mason.

Mrs Utton says that commissioning the stone helped the grieving process for her family. "Ever since I have wanted to tell people that there are alternatives to the standard dreary designs," she says.

Her sentiments are echoed by Kathleen Lawrence, 89, who had a stone cut for her late husband, Rex, by Alec Peever, one of this country's leading letter-cutters. Rex Lawrence was a farmer and Devon county councillor. The stone depicts his involvement with the local community, with a tree, a tractor sowing seed and a seagull. Mrs Lawrence liked the stone so much that she commissioned one for herself to go alongside her husband's, depicting her own interests. The seagull from her husband's stone re-appears in hers.

Mr Peever was apprenticed to Richard Kindersley, whose father,

David, worked with Eric Gill, the acknowledged master of fine letter-cutting in this century. "You can only be expressive in stone by obtaining a personal brief from the person commissioning the stone and working on ideas together," he says. "It could not be more different from a catalogue from the monumental industry full of standard stones that look like fireplaces and lack any real individuality."

Peever has depicted a child's balloon, family pets and steam billowing up from a distant, unseen locomotive in the case of a railway buff. He is currently cutting a series of 30 paving stones, each with a quotation from the author's work, for Roald Dahl's widow, Felicity.

Harriet Frazer started Memorials By Artists from her Suffolk home in 1988 after she had great difficulty in finding a fitting memorial for her step-daughter who had died suddenly at the age of 26. "The vast majority of memorial companies still give the impression that there is little or no alternative to the soulless machine-cut stones, often made from shiny black foreign granite or marble. These stones do not weather at all like our British sandstones and limestones and do not harmonise with the beautiful old stones in many of our churchyards."

"A memorial stone is the only work of art most people are likely to

commission in their lives. Commissioning a fine and thoughtful stone in this way can greatly assist in the grieving process."

Teresa Quinn from the National Association of Memorial Masons claims that few people consider deviating from standard designs. "Our members include some extremely good masons who are tearing their hair out to do something different, but only once or twice a year are they asked to do so. Generally, people see the shiny memorials – especially polished granite – and say, 'We'd like something just like that.'" However, although these stones are seen in most cemeteries, they are banned in many churchyards because the church authorities do not like the shiny finishes. "Where they are seen in churchyards, it is usually because the vicar has not had the heart to say no."

Memorials By Artists, Snape Priory, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1SA (01728 688934). A booklet explaining the service costs £5 post free. National Association of Memorial Masons, Crown Buildings, High Street, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1SL (01296 434750). A list later this year will highlight members who can produce individual memorials. Alec Peever, The Old Post Office, Combe, Witney, Oxon OX8 8NA (01993 868012).

Gravestones: a user's guide

Tomorrow is the fourth English Day of the Dead. The event, based on the Mexican Day of the Dead, was started by the Natural Death Centre (0181-208 2853), which claims that a similar English tradition existed but was moved from Spring to October and later became distorted as Halloween. Pumpkins and ghosts have little to do with this weekend's events which takes memorials as its theme. Here are our suggestions for something more personal than the standard funeral package and production-line headstone.

1) **PLANT A TREE:** Britain's 19 woodland burial grounds, set up by farmers and wildlife trusts, provide inexpensive, environmentally friendly burial sites. Trees are planted to mark graves, gradually creating woodland. Burial can be in shrouds or biodegradable coffins. Visit your nearest site on tomorrow's open day: call the Natural Death Centre for details.

2) **CELEBRATION BOXES:** Make a secular shrine to your loved-one's memory. Friends and relatives bring photographs, letters, and other objects they may associate with the deceased and place them in a decorative box. For something really beautiful ask Yvonne Malik (015242 21767) to decorate one of her specially designed boxes, which come with tiny shelves on which mementoes can be placed.

3) **CUSTOMISED COFFINS:** For more and more people the traditional oak coffin with brass attachments seems a sad waste of money and a poor reflection of their life and personality. Thankfully there are alternatives. Vic Fearn & Co, a coffin manufacturer based in Nottingham (0115-977 1571), has a number of artists on its books who will handpaint a coffin or casket to your specifications.

4) **CASKETS, URNS AND REALLY USEFUL COFFINS:** Heaven on Earth in Bristol (01179 421 836) stocks a range of weird and wonderful funeral paraphernalia, including fabulous urns should you want your ashes to remain housebound. The handpainted coffins include a selection that start out as shelves, wine racks or blanket chests before you take up residence.



Checkout Fitch's Ark

Concept: A gallery-come-shop devoted to all things animal: glassware, ceramics, jewellery and sculpture, depicting anything from a toad to a tiger. A percentage of the profits goes to the Born Free Foundation, which works for animal welfare and the preservation of endangered species. Most of the artists will work on commission, so if you like the style of a piece but favour another animal, something can usually be arranged. Prices range from under a fiver to a cool £7,000 for an awesome life-size bronze bust of a gorilla.

Customers: Although the mailing list boasts 1,500 arty animal lovers the passing trade reflects the Maiden Vale address – smart mothers with well turned out kids in tow.

Favourite item: Neil Hardy's series of automata entitled *Evolutionary Blunders*, in particular *Survival of the Fittest*: turn a wooden handle and four endangered species rotate – a crocodile, a cheetah, a whale and a gorilla with a motif describing their attributes – oldest, fastest, biggest and strongest. Then a box flips open to reveal a couch potato slobbering out with beer, TV and the caption 'survival of the fittest'. Worth every penny of £700. Also checkout *Leopard Leaping*, an elegant birchwood carving by David Sykes, £775.

Do not buy: Horrendous magnetic notepads covered with fluffy kittens and wrinkly puppies £4.99, 6 Clifton Road, Little Venice, London W9 1SS. Tel: 0171-266 0302.

Good thing

Safety Can – £12.99

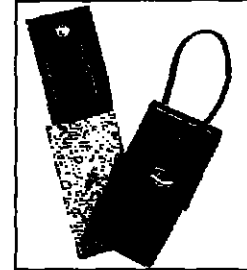
An end to bloodied tea towels. 34,000 accidents involving can-openers are reported annually to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. Safety Can, a chunky new can-opener will stop you becoming a statistic. After four years of research, Culinare has come up with a design that leaves those dangerous edges smooth and safe. For stockist details, call 0181-868 4355.



Mad thing

Mobile phone bag £34.95

Well-connected teenage chatterboxes can choose chic black, red patent quilt or minimalist clear perspex to keep their lifeline safe while on the move. An essential accessory sure to impress mates between bouts of dialling potential boyfriends around the world. How about a mobile-phone bill-holder for parents? Mail order from Johnny loves Rosie, 131 Greenhill, Prince Arthur Road, London NW3 3TY. Tel: 0171-435 0089.



Top ten

Tartans at The Scotch House, 2 Brompton Rd, London SW1

In the months since *Braveheart* hit our shores the following tartans have hit the top ten for made-to-measure items such as kilts, trousers and shawls. The 100 per cent pure wool tartan costs £25 per metre. A man's kilt requires about 3.7m and a woman's 2.5m and both will take roughly six to eight weeks for completion Tel: 0171-581 2151.

- 1)Blackwatch
- 2)Royal Stewart
- 3)Lindsey
- 4)Buchanan
- 5)Cameron
- 6)Campbell
- 7)Fraser
- 8)Gordon
- 9)MacDonald
- 10)MacLeod

Six of the best square-toe shoes

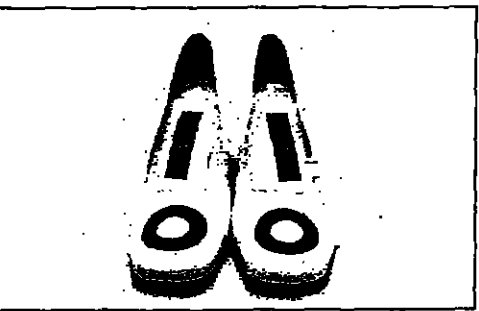
Stylist: Charlie Harrington. Photographer: Emma Bean.



1 Ravel. £39.99. Candy pink court shoe with a good sturdy high heel. Patent toe with brogue detail. Fun and elegant. Available from Ravel stores nationwide. Enquiries 0171 631 0224.



2 Red Or Dead. £90. Cream patent shoe with silver feature buckle. A semi-transparent heel gives this shoe a quirky edge. Available from branches of Red Or Dead nationwide. Enquiries 0171 937 3137.



3 Patrick Cox. £160. White leather slip-on shoes with black circle detail and sensible heel. A smart look to team with summer skirts and dresses. Available from Patrick Cox, 8 Symons Street, SW3. Jones, Floral Street, London WC2 and The Strand, Leeds.



4 Kurt Geiger. £199. Navy court shoe with white piping and white chain buckle. A classic look for summer. Available from Kurt Geiger at Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1 and Selfridges, Oxford Street, London W1. Enquiries 0171 620 0024.



5 Office. £49.99. Brown patent square-toe shoe with narrow strap and silver buckle. A low heel and comfortable shape. Available from Office stores, London. Enquiries 0181 838 4447.



6 Faith. £39.99. High-heeled black patent slingback with square toe and brogue detailing. A good shoe for the transition from spring to summer. Available from branches of Faith nationwide. Enquiries

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Based on an original idea by

Where once only Olivier dared to tread, now the big guns are lining up to make big movies from the Shakespearian canon. And they're doing surprisingly big box office. Coming soon to a cinema near you: McKellen's 'Richard III', Branagh's 'Hamlet', Nunn's 'Twelfth Night' and Noble's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

Hollywood has discovered a promising new scriptwriter who doesn't demand mega-millions for a screenplay or throw artistic temper tantrums when his words are cut or meddled with. And his work not only guarantees an audience but attracts many of the world's leading actors for well below their usual scale of fee. Now that Hollywood's twigged that the Bard can be box office, everybody is getting in on the act.

Sir Ian McKellen's *Richard III* opens in Britain next week. Kenneth Branagh, who can currently be seen as Iago in Oliver Parker's film of *Othello*, is hard at work on *Hamlet*, which should premiere in the US in time to be considered for next year's Oscars. Trevor Nunn's *Twelfth Night*, co-starring his wife Imogen Stubbs and Branagh's supposed inamorata Helena Bonham Carter, should also be ready in the autumn. Adrian Noble has adapted his Royal Shakespeare Company production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for celluloid with the sultry Lindsay Duncan as Titania. Fiona Shaw is committing her *Richard II*, which she has performed successfully on stage, to film in a Deborah Warner production. Rising star Clare Daines is playing Juliet in a film about Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers directed by the Australian Baz Luhrmann of *Strictly Ballroom* fame - while Juliet turns into a cow in a mooted version (from Troma Films) complete with car crashes and explosions. Quentin Tarantino, director of *Pulp Fiction* and *Reservoir Dogs* is said to be planning a black-and-white version of *Macbeth*. Then there are all the Shakespeare-inspired spin-offs, from Branagh's own *In The Bleak Midwinter*, which plays on *Hamlet*, to Al Pacino's *Looking for Richard* (about a company rehearsing *Richard III*), Stephen Poliakoff's *Food of Love*, based on *Twelfth Night*, and Granada Films' *The Dream*.

"Money's at the bottom of it," says Professor Stanley Wells, Director of the Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham, and co-editor of *Shakespeare and the Moving Image*. "They've discovered Shakespeare can be good box office, which is equally connected with the willingness of certain big box office draws to appear in Shakespeare."

But there is now more Shakespeare on the screen at any time since the golden age of the Forties and Fifties (see panel, right). Ian McKellen thinks the sudden surge of Hollywood Shakespeare is "basically because the BBC and ITV don't do Shakespeare any more. If the BBC had agreed to finance *Richard III* we'd have done it for television. But they didn't, so we had to go to the US for funding."

One of the strings usually attached to such backing is the stipulation that some big American box office names take part, and the film inevitably opens first in the US (in the autumn to be eligible for the next year's Oscars). For *Richard III* the American names were Annette Bening and Robert Downey Jr, who were encouraged to keep their accents to play the social-climbing Queen Elizabeth as a kind of Wallis Simpson and her brother as someone who was "Earl" by name, not by title.

"Hollywood has discovered that they can do these prestigious Shakespeare projects for comparatively little, since people want to be in them," says McKellen, who waived his own fee for a year out of dedication to the project that has now, at 56, turned him into a Hollywood film star at last. Directed by Richard Loncraine, with McKellen adapting the screenplay from his Royal National Theatre performance directed by Richard Eyre, it cost a mere £6 million. Branagh's forthcoming *Hamlet* has a budget of about £12 million from the American company Castle Rock Films. Despite this he has managed to attract the likes of Charlton Heston, Robin Williams, Billy Crystal, Gerard Depardieu and Ken Dodd in cameo roles, in addition to all-star principals such as Julie Christie and Derek Jacobi.



Richard III - Natural Born Killer: Ian McKellen (left) plays a gun-toting fascist king in his splatter-fest Shakespeare adaptation

"Actors are often glad of the opportunity to work in a film like this for much less money than they might otherwise command - for all the old clichés, that they are very good parts," says Branagh. The parts attract Hollywood actors, and the Hollywood actors attract audiences who would not be seen dead (though perhaps snoring loudly) in a theatre. Franco Zeffirelli's 1990 *Hamlet* is more likely to have brought a whole new audience to Shakespeare than to its star, Mel Gibson. "There is now less feeling that these plays can be tackled only by English actors with an enormous amount of Shakespeare experience," says Professor Wells, "...that a Mel Gibson can be trusted with *Hamlet*, or a Laurence Fishburne with *Othello*." The scholarly Wells is not perturbed at the thought of a *Pulp Macbeth* from Quentin Tarantino. "There has been an alternative series of films for a long time, the most notable Derek Jarman's *The Tempest* with Toyah Wilcox as Miranda. But they have usually been on low budgets and 'high brow' in the sense that most avant-garde cinema tends to be."

What is different now is that Shakespeare is being made for the mass market, with one eye on the Oscars and another on the potentially vast video and CD-ROM market to follow. So the New Wave of Shakespeare films try to create a world that cinema audiences are already comfortable with, and that includes chase scenes, explosions, fights and gory deaths.

So McKellen's *Richard III* is a Fascist-style dictator in a 1930s Britain, who commits enough brutal killings to satisfy the most

bloodthirsty fans of *Natural Born Killers* and *Die Hard*. The "chase" scene in which Richmond finally corners Richard (who cries "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse") when his armoured vehicle breaks down on a burnt-out section of scaffolding near the Battersea Power Station would not disgrace Schwarzenegger and Stallone.

The new films are not "Shakespeare, Men In Tights", as Russell Jackson of the Shakespeare Institute (and production consultant on all Branagh's Shakespeare films) puts it. Most are set in the 19th century - like Branagh's *Hamlet* and Trevor Nunn's *Twelfth Night* - "because the 19th century is a period which is romantically appealing but doesn't look like fancy dress".

The new Shakespeare films draw both upon the theatrical and cinematic traditions. Adrian Noble's *Midsummer Night's Dream* echoes Peter Brook's production in the 1960s - only a few minutes of which were filmed. "I think he is deliberately evoking memories of the Peter Brook production," says Professor Wells, "but often to play around with it in a post-structural way." Branagh's *Hamlet* makes use of the long, uninterrupted takes in Olivier's (although he hates the comparisons that are so frequently drawn between them).

But while the New Shakespearians may look back over one shoulder to the greats of the past, their biggest task remains captivating the audiences of the present. Kenneth Branagh (as he explains below) is prepared to make fewer concessions than

most: his film will be the full, no-line-cut-or-rewritten version that will come in at a little under four hours; McKellen's *Richard III* is a brisk (one hour and 45 minutes), action-packed number, in which Shakespeare's lines are butchered as brutally as Richard knocks off his enemies.

Still, one wonders, on hearing Branagh grapple with lines like "I fingered their packet", whether McKellen's decision to chop unwieldy lines and modernise outdated ones might not have been wiser. He is confident Shakespeare would have thought so, but Branagh argues that he'd rather use Shakespeare's actual words since they, for him, seem to say it all too superbly to paraphrase.

But in the movies, Branagh is the exception. Mainstream theatre has long been boldly experimental with Shakespeare, as have "fringe" films. Now, at last, major film makers have discovered that they can have fun with Shakespeare and that he's very forgiving.

"Many film critics hardly ever go to the theatre," says McKellen, "and they don't realise that every year there are several *Richard IIIs* on stage which push the boundaries further. Now films are catching up, throwing caution to the wind and showing that you don't have to treat Shakespeare reverently to reward him."

Ian McKellen's *Richard III* is on release from next Friday

VICTORIA MCKEE



Kenneth Branagh: 'Hamlet is the hub of his work. It's where plays go to and come from'

Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlet*, a 19th-century student prince in waistcoat and trousers instead of doublet and hose, inhabits a castle of grand mirrored halls and claustrophobic secret "closets". The main marble hall with its 28 huge mirrors (each able subtly to swivel and tilt to avoid picking up cameras or crew) and 7,500 hand-marbled black and white tiles - more dazzling than the 103 black and white dalmatians filming next door for Disney - is part of one of the biggest film sets ever built in Britain. Two vast soundstages at Shepperton Studios had to be dragged together, with monumental Blenheim Palace chosen for external shots of Elsinore.

"I wanted the outside to be terribly glamorous - like the 19th-century world of *Helmut* magazine - but to show that behind the façade people are drinking too much, gambling too much, doing dark deeds and spying at each other through hidden doors." Branagh explains during a rare moment when the actor/director is not needed in one capacity or the other. "The mirrors are an image for people who are under the spotlight all the time and who are aware that everyone's watching them. We also place people in positions where they have to look at themselves."

"That's one of the more obvious things this play is about - the difficulty of having a personal life that has any degree of freedom when you have a very high public profile." A rufous smile flits across a face far gaunter than Branagh's fans have so far seen on him and he rubs the carefully trimmed goatee beard he has added as a counterpoint to the bleached blonde hair he, like Olivier before him (with whom he is weary of being compared),

felt necessary for playing "the Dane".

He is clearly thinking of his own personal life, so recently under the media microscope after the painfully public disintegration of his marriage to Emma Thompson. Now he can empathise more than ever with his friend the Prince of Wales, whom he consulted before playing Henry V about what it was like to be a king-in-waiting.

"I explored this issue a bit in *Henry V*, and it's something I'm quite interested in," Branagh admits. "While I haven't asked the Prince of Wales specifically about this film, of course it's instructive to watch someone like that, whom I observe going through the process of being 'the observed of all observers'."

Like Branagh himself? "Yes, sure," he acknowledges. "That's the kind of figure we're fascinated with, and the people in *Hamlet* are as fascinated as we are today with the lives of the royal family, and the gossip about the prince who should have got the job as King and who's 'loved by the distracted multitude'. And then the queen marries again very quickly, and the prince seems to be going mad and they've just heard that the old Prime Minister, Polonius - John Major, if you like - has been murdered. It doesn't need much imagination to make it very pertinent today."

So why not set it in today's world, rather than a 19th-century world with military overtones?

"By setting the play in the 19th century you can evoke the world of the Hapsburgs, a world where Europe's boundaries were constantly shifting and its fate was in the hands of a few families who as well as having all this political power were subject to internal argy-bargies."

Royal families, he points out, have long been "dysfunctional", but in a Victorian era of model families there is more dramatic potential for it to shock.

Yet Branagh keeps emphasising that *Hamlet* is a play for today.

"It is an incredible observation of the lives of families, of sexual jealousy, filial love, parental love - and lack of communication. That's the big problem between Hamlet and his mother Gertrude. If they'd had a conversation about why she wanted to marry so quickly things might have been very different - it might never have happened." Although this play was written in a potboiler form of the time - a revenge melodrama - with all the usual elements of ghost, murder and someone going mad, Shakespeare happens to have endowed that form with an extraordinary debate about the nature of being a human being. On another level it's about what it is to be happy, and to find peace of mind."

Does *Hamlet* ever discover that - and has Branagh? "Yes, I think he does. But his tragedy is that he only finds some kind of peace with acceptance of his own imminent death." And himself? "Umm... well, working on this role over many years has been part of the process of doing that."

Throwing himself body and soul into this epic film of *Hamlet* - the first time anyone has attempted to film the whole thing, he points out - seems to have been just the tonic he needed during a difficult period in his personal life.

"It's not falling off a log for me to direct myself - whatever people may feel about the incipient megalomania it may represent," he insists. "It's very, very, very hard. But somehow I feel all the work I've done up to this point has been leading up to this."

Why has he chosen to do the whole play - with additions, even, to the full First Folio version? Surely it's been limiting, since he is committed to leaving not a single line on the cutting-room floor? "No, it's been challenging," Branagh emphasises. "Because it seemed there were so many instances to enhance the play. In Olivier's film there were no Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, no Fortinbras - and I think that's a great loss to *Hamlet* and to the play. I wanted to see how it affected other parts of the play if you do have Fortinbras present throughout as a sort of opportunist thug on the borders, ready to move in at the drop of a hat, so that you have the element of political, as well as personal, instability in the lives of the Royal family."

Won't it run well over four hours, longer, even, than *Gone With the Wind*? "No, we did it at the Barbican in three hours 50 minutes with two intervals," he shoots back. "I think this will be three and a half, with an intermission for people to buy Cokes and popcorn."

Branagh first became fascinated by Shakespeare when he saw Richard Chamberlain play *Hamlet* on television in 1972. "It was very good, I thought. Gielgud was the Ghost. Then I saw Derek Jacobi's *Hamlet* when I was about 15 and it just got into my system. I feel it's the hub of Shakespeare's work. It's where plays go to and come from. It may not necessarily be the greatest, although I think it has a strong claim to being, but somehow it's the heart."

'Hamlet' is released in the UK in early 1997

VM



Trevor Nunn: 'No one can do a great deal of tampering with him and get away with it'

Trevor Nunn's *Twelfth Night* should prove one of the cheapest of the current crop of Shakespeare films with a mere £3m budget - a combination of British and American money. "Adrian Noble managed his entirely studio-based *Midsummer Night's Dream* on about £2.5m," Nunn notes, "but we've attempted a piece of cinema shot on location with large-screen values and very small resources."

Twelfth Night, a co-operative venture between the American Fineline and the British Renaissance Films, was filmed in often cold and wet Cornwall with, as Nunn puts it, "a lot of privation". Nunn's pregnant wife, Imogen Stubbs (who recently gave birth to a son), was among a cast including Helena Bonham-Carter, Nigel Hawthorne, Ben Kingsley, Imelda Staunton and Mel Smith. He is pleased with his home-grown actors. "With a shared Britishness it was possible to locate the film - admittedly in the fictional Illyria. There is a far-reaching Englishness about the sense of humour which would be unwise to stifle."

Nunn boasts that as the transvestite Viola, Stubbs has to "ride like a man, fence like a man, play snooker and wrestle". Ask him how she managed in her condition and Nunn goes on the defensive. "Don't talk to me about nepotism. I wasn't - but swiftly steered the conversation to what seemed safer ground, his relationship with Shakespeare."

"No one should feel they can do a great deal of tampering with Shakespeare and get away with it for very long - he spins in his grave and causes

a great deal of mischief," says the former Royal Shakespeare Company boss, now artistic-director-in-waiting of the Royal National Theatre.

So how much tampering has he done? "Well, if one sets out to make a film the most important thing to realise is that one isn't photographing a stage production - so the first thing one has to do is contract the text into a manageable length. When you look at the many texts of *Hamlet*, you see many playing versions - so you have to be careful about approaching these texts as if they are set in aspic. They are bits of working material and are meant to be elastic." As Nunn feels that "the Elizabethan device of soliloquy is problematic in the cinema" he has unceremoniously dumped them from his film. Isn't that enough to set Shakespeare spinning? "No," he says firmly.

"They are a device that roots the material in its stage background. I don't think there is that same relationship when the character begins to address the camera. Some use voice-over - as in Olivier's *Hamlet* - which I think is particularly unfortunate, because all the mental energy disappears if you don't see the thoughts becoming language. Yet Olivier was aware all those years ago that there was something inherently uncinematic about soliloquies."

Filming *Hamlet* without soliloquies, he hastens to add, would not be a good idea. "But I've reduced Viola's soliloquy material and have used different forms of expression: Malvolio (Nigel Hawthorne) has 'reverie'."

"When I'm working on a large

William Shakespeare

A brief history of Shakespeare in the movies

We will shortly be celebrating a century of Shakespeare on film. One of the first films ever made, in 1899, was Herbert Beerbohm Tree's *King John* – silent, of course – as was Sarah Bernhardt's *Hamlet* in 1900. If the concept of silent Shakespeare sounds silly, Professor Wells points out: "It shows that Shakespeare is not, as people sometimes erroneously say, all in the words. Shakespeare was writing visuals as well as verbals, which is one reason that the plays translate so well, because their basic scenarios are strong ones – as the recent 'animated Shakespeare' showed."

But there hasn't been such a flurry of filming Shakespeare for the big screen with big names since the For-

But the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties were a fertile time for Shakespeare on the small screen – particularly for lengthy history cycles, given names such as *An Age of Kings* (BBC 1960) and *The Wars of the Roses* (BBC 1964). The BBC also churned out a series of rather cheap-looking (though well played) adaptations throughout the Seventies and into the Eighties, but Trevor Nunn helmed an impressive *Macbeth* for Thames in 1978, with Ian McKellen and Judi Dench. But by the end of the Eighties Shakespeare was back in the cinemas, with Kenneth Branagh directing and starring in *Henry V*. Its success, particularly in the US, convinced the industry that the Bard was once again



ties and Fifties, when Olivier directed and starred in *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, and *Richard III*, Orson Welles his *Macbeth*, and Marlon Brando played Mark Antony in Joseph Mankiewicz's *Julius Caesar*. Before that, in the Thirties, a youthful Olivier starred as Orlando in *As You Like It*, and an all-star cast including Mickey Rooney (as Puck) and James Cagney (as Bottom) did Max Reinhardt's sparkling *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Between that early Golden Age of Shakespeare films and the present renaissance, which is generally credited to have been set in motion by Branagh's *Henry V* in 1989 for, appropriately, Renaissance Films (following the footsteps of Olivier on two counts by starting with this play that Olivier made in 1944 to raise morale during the war and by directing it himself), there were a few scattered efforts such as Zeffirelli's *Taming of the Shrew* (1967) with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton; *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) with unknowns Olivia Hussey and Leonard Whiting; Olivier's *Othello* in 1965; Tony Richardson's *Hamlet*, featuring the darling of the day Marianne Faithfull (1969); and Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* (1971, for Playboy Productions), with Francesca Annis doing the sleepwalking scene nude.

a worthwhile investment, and the following year Zeffirelli returned to familiar territory with his Mel Gibson-starring *Hamlet*. The presence of a big box-office name led to even more impressive grosses, which no doubt accounts for the presence of American heart-throbs Denzel Washington and Keanu Reeves in Branagh's 1993 adaptation of *Much Ado About Nothing*. In the US this fresh, breezy comedy made over \$20m, an outstanding performance for an art-house picture.

The most recent Shakespearean adaptation reworked one of the great tragedies as an erotic thriller, presumably hoping to appeal to the Saturday night multiplex crowd. Meeting with tepid reviews, Oliver Parker's *Othello*, despite all the sex, violence and drastic shortening, did not live up to expectations at the box office. But it was notable for featuring another compelling performance from the Bard-friendly Branagh, and also the screen's first genuinely black *Othello*, African-American actor Laurence Fishburne. Some critics carped about the ruthless editing of the text and insertion of new scenes, but others maintained that such revisionism is essential if Shakespeare is to survive.

VM

Additional reporting by Scott Hughes



Adrian Noble: 'Thanks to Tarantino, it's suddenly OK for characters on stage to deliver lengthy pieces'

Inside a Soho editing suite, Adrian Noble is putting the final flourishes to his first movie. "It's terribly inhibiting if someone else is here," he tells me. "It's like making love with someone else in the room," chips in Peter Hollywood, the film editor. Looking at it like that, I am infinitely more embarrassed than they are, but like a gooseberry, I cling on in.

They obligingly set to. As the film flaps clankily from spool to spool, Noble peers at the screen. The shot pans across a blissfully idealised moonlit attic bedroom, skimming the pop-up theatre, teddies and treasured ornaments until it alights on a golden-haired cutie (nine-year-old Osheen Jones in his screen debut) snuggled under an eiderdown. He has fallen asleep reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, blue-bound with gold-lettered and illustrated by Arthur Rackham (an important clue to the aesthetic from which Noble's film will take its cue). As the clock (a porcelain pierrot and Noble's own prop) chimes midnight, the boy awakes and walks towards the light at the end of a dark corridor.

"Gosh," gasps Noble, for an instant a small boy himself, marvelling at the magic that has realised his paper dreams. "Ding, ding, ding..." he sings, experimenting with where the clock strikes should begin. Lots of concentrated gun-chewing, heavy sighs and drumming of fingers. "Let's cut the zoom and pick it up here and put in the shot of the disturbances under the crack at the door, probably with the close-up of the kiddy. I've a feeling that the best point for the 'ding' isn't as we pan past the clock – that's a bit on-the-nose – but after..."

You might expect the artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company to show his faith in Shakespeare by playing

him straight. Not a bit of it. Noble's screenplay introduces a child-dreamer whose burgeoning sexual awareness and fascination with the peculiar things adults do and say to one another in the cause of love; he puts sex centre screen. "I reckoned that a dreamer would open the door for the audience on this extraordinary sexual world," says Noble, "and make it at once innocent and sexy."

Noble was initially resistant to making a movie out of his stage *Dream*. "I loathe pieces of stage that are turned into television or film," he says. "I turn off. I always think, 'Oh my God, this is so embarrassing.'" But the persistence – and flattery – of producer Paul Arnott (bankrolling the film through Channel 4 and the National Lottery) paid off and Noble finally capitulated. "It suddenly made sense when it occurred to me that because this is Shakespeare's most fantastical play and because the cinema has a marvellous ability to deal with fantasy, maybe there was a way in here. I thought I'd try and make what would normally be regarded as the play's biggest weakness – its theatricality and artificiality – into strengths."

Special effects apart (and there are many swanky bits of computerised high-techery), the film lines up the same RSC cast (led by Alex Jennings and Lindsay Duncan) and mines similar ore as Noble's surreal stage version for the RSC: the idea of a visible mortal world, which is a mirror of another invisible fairy world where objects have realities both sides of the veil. In the human context, the mechanicals – Bottom and his troupe of amateur thespians – charge into rehearsals at the scout hut shaking rain from black umbrellas. Once we've moved into the fairyland forest, these images are magically translated so

that raindrops reappear as coloured light bulbs, which swing drunkenly from flexes, meanwhile the Magritte umbrella is now huge, pink and inverted to create a luxurious bower in which the goofy ass (Des Barrit) humps the exquisite fairy queen Titania (Lindsay Duncan). The mechanicals double as scuffling fairies, zany powder-puff creatures in vibrant fuchsia, orange and purple with matching feather hairdos.

When Noble's production of the play opened last year, critics called it the best *Dream* since Peter Brooks' legendary Sixties show (a comparison Noble slyly sought when Hippolyta is first encountered swinging on a trapeze). "Beautiful", "intellectually provocative", "ravishing", they variously gushed, applauding the way in which the comedy of errors was rooted in the character's sexuality and terrors. Even the mealy-mouthed couldn't find much to quibble about beyond it being design-led (and why not?) and swamped by over-obvious Freudian symbolism (such as the rows of doors through which people move from innocence to revelation, ignorance to self-awareness).

Noble's film pushes harder in these directions. Indeed, his device of a child-dreamer also flirts dangerously with cliché and is potentially even a tad twee – its use of the child is reminiscent of Bergman's film *The Magic Flute*, in which the focus keeps returning to a bright-eyed little girl in the audience to remind us how magical it all is and there's more to it than just boring old Mozart. "Ah, but I make the boy a participant [the child plays puppeteer, manipulating the characters on the stage of his toy theatre]," counters Noble. "It can be twee but what gave me the confidence to go ahead was that the play kept on referring to this human emotion of

wonder – the wonder of falling in love, the wonder of acting. I felt Shakespeare was tapping this very naïve and innocent emotion of wonder more than any other."

"And I think it's an honest interpretation. Shakespeare is playing with the theatrical idea of people watching other people and I'm just adding another watcher. Actually, it's just occurred to me that we could add yet another layer of watching and cut away at some point to reveal the little boy in the cinema and eating pop-corn and watching the film of the *Dream*. The trouble is that Osheen [the young actor] has had his hair cut and we'll have to wait till it grows before we can try it. What I like about film is that you can go on changing things, overlay one image on another to create another level of complexity. You can juxtapose and choose who is listening and watching in a way you can't on stage where you can only guide the audience, who ultimately choose for themselves. On film your proscenium arch is 1 x 1.85 [the points to the screen] and what you put in there is the only issue. A very interesting power – total control," he says, looking merrily megalomaniacal.

"But Shakespeare's plays lend themselves naturally to film – he's never been afraid of flitting from an intimate bedroom scene to battle field, from a scene with nobles to one with fairies. And thanks to Tarantino, it's suddenly OK for characters on stage to deliver lengthy speeches. If Shakespeare were alive now he'd certainly be doing theatre – but he would also be making movies."

These days, after all, who isn't? *Dream* is released in the UK at the end of 1996

GEORGINA BROWN

stage with a Shakespeare text it becomes very important that it be both projected and rhythmically accurately presented, with a reliance on pentameter. But when I'm dealing with a small space in the theatre, different techniques are required, and Shakespeare becomes quite an astonishingly naturalistic playwright, with all sorts of suggestions of real speech rhythms. In filming Shakespeare I'm much more influenced by that small theatre work, and I think that Shakespeare can emerge as an extraordinarily juicy and real scriptwriter."

He has chosen to set his film in the 19th century not because his wife looks so good in breeches but because (as almost every director who makes that choice says) "the comic elements are so much to do with social hierarchy and class distinctions, which we can recognise in the 19th century. This play has a green baize door throughout that separates the aristocrats and the servants – 'Art any more than a steward?' – and we know so much more about late 19th-century social detail than we do about Elizabethan."

But he also insists that this is a film that will explore very contemporary themes. "You've got this extraordinary crossover of gender in a story where a girl loses her twin brother and keeps him alive in her mind by becoming him – to survive. Then she experiences what it is to be a man in a man's world, and on the receiving end of female affections. I think Shakespeare is absolutely fascinated with the dividing line of gender – which every magazine and fashion designer

is at the moment, because how we perceive gender is changing and shifting very fast."

This play explores almost "all permutations of gender attraction", Nunn notes, with men falling for women dressed as men (Orsino for Viola); women falling for women dressed as men (Olivia for Viola); men falling in love with men (Antonio with Sebastian) and men with women (Sir Toby Belch and Maria), and the phenomenon of self-love (Malvolio).

"By choosing to set the film in the 19th century we also get away from the Elizabethan silhouette of the boy in large breeches, padded doublet and ruffs – there is something either pantomimic or cherubic or feminine or safe about that idea of the Elizabethan boy. In our production you get the 19th-century boy – in this case like a cadet soldier in a highly military court, which I take from the text because Ilyria is supposed to be in a state of war."

The final version of *Twelfth Night* will be subject to the mercy of American cinema preview audiences. "They will be asked to fill in cards offering opinions," he says, "and I hope and pray that they will like the way it's been put together."

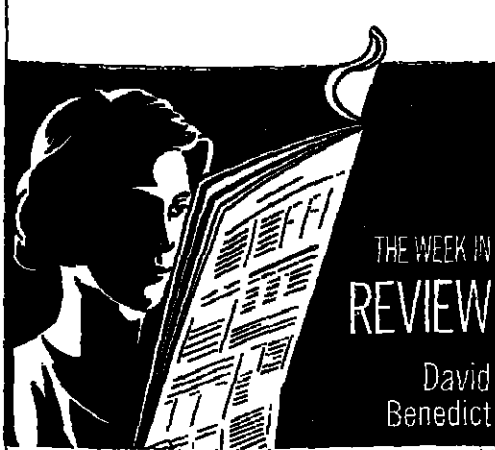
If they don't, will he change anything – would he grant them a happy ending, with no "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you!" promise from Malvolio, and pave the way for a *Twelfth Night II*?

"I hope I won't have to."

Twelfth Night is currently in post-production


VM

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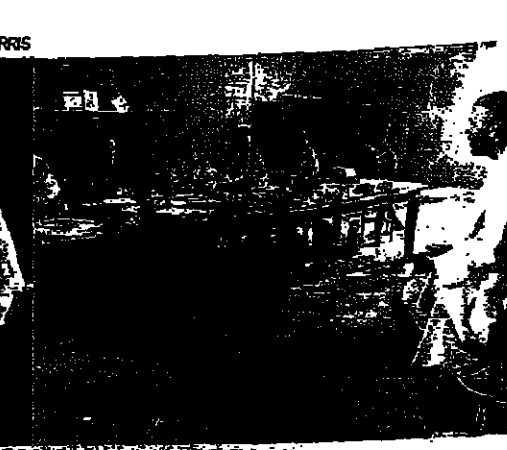
THE WEEK IN REVIEW
David Benedict


LAURIE LEWIS



STUART MORRIS







The enduring allure of the serial narrative

Serialisation, it seems, can be damaging to your health. Charles Dickens, who became hideously expert in the horrors of the monthly and even weekly deadline, knew this in more ways than one. Throughout his career his own writing commitments frequently overlapped, so that two novels would be advancing at the same time (not to speak of other journalistic writing and editing duties). Despite this, his work was a monthly publication, when the death of his sister-in-law, a severe domestic affliction of no ordinary kind, meant that the eagerly awaited numbers of *Pickwick Papers* and *Oliver Twist* did not appear as advertised. But his general determination not to disappoint his readers – either in quality or timing – came at a cost, of fatigue to the point of collapse. He described the experience of writing *Hard Times*, which was published weekly, as “absolutely CRUSHING”.

The inevitable lack of publication could have hazards for readers too, who soon came to be as much in thrall to the publication date as the hapless author, as much tyrannised by the unyielding timetable of deferred pleasure. There are many stories told about the wild popularity of Dickens's novels – touching accounts of workers clubbing together their earnings to borrow the latest instalment from a circulating library, the anecdote of the man whose dying words were “Well, thank God, *Pickwick* will be out in 10 days’ time.” But the tale which really sums up the addictive power of serial stories is the account of a Baltimore tragedy: apparently one crowd on the quayside waiting for the final instalment of *The Old Curiosity Shop* was so dense that several eager readers were pitched into the harbour, where they promptly drowned. This has a faint smack of Victorian PR about it, to be honest, but the point remains the same. In those days the new Dickens was to die for.

The idea that there is a core of danger in our appetite for fictions is a persistent one. Earlier this year, several newspapers (including this one) reported on the splendidly named Jack Duckworth Memorial Clinic, a pioneering institution set up to treat soap addiction. David West, its founder, said of serious sufferers: “Reality and fiction become hopelessly confused. The thought of missing an episode is unbearable; actually missing one can result in psychosis.” The image was a striking one – *Coronation Street* junkies shrieking in their straitjackets, permanently deranged because they had missed what Raquel said to Curly. It fed perfectly into a general anxiety about the allure of serials, the sense that they offer satisfactions which real life cannot. Unfortunately, the entire elaborate construction – complete with “cured” addicts and solemn press releases – turned out to be a fiction itself, a gleeful attempt to blur boundaries rather than a clinical attempt to define them. That the hoax was taken up so eagerly and unquestioningly, though, suggests the idea touches on an exposed nerve.

It also underlines the massive proliferation of serial narrative brought about by television, a development which means that real addicts are never more than a few hours away from their next fix. What’s more, this drip-feed of narrative satisfaction involves no unexpected sense of completion, as Dickens’s

THEATRE Orlan, ICA, London

She may have had more face-lifts than Nancy Reagan, but for Orlan it’s not a vanity thing, it’s an art thing. Judith Palmer saw her in the flesh

Six years ago, on her 43rd birthday, a petite, chic Frenchwoman went to visit a cosmetic surgeon. Nothing so very strange in that. How many other *femmes d’un certain age* were also flicking through the *Vogue* small ads, hearts set on *un lifting*?

But this particular Parisian was Orlan, an avant-garde artist, who had already changed her name for art, and was now embarking on her most audacious plan yet, to remodel her own face as the ultimate act of self-portraiture. Nine operations, a new chin, a new forehead and two horns later, Orlan is back with an exhibition of gory photographs in Newcastle, and a lecture and new performance at the ICA.

And here she is in the flesh, the charnel queen. Inscrutable and dour. Dressed in black, skin as a corpse, lips a blackberry-stained pout, eyes hidden behind diamond-studded shades, not a hair out of place in her crisp blonde bob. But perched on top of that haughty majestic head, like an extra-terrestrial toupee, teased and back-combed to new heights of silliness, sits a bright blue quiff. Could this woman have a sense of humour after all?


Her arguments are cogent, her prose pithy and lucid, but boy, does this woman like the sound of her own voice. We hear a lot more of it during her new live performance, *Woman with head...*

The curtains part, and there, balanced on a chrome tabletop, is the disembodied blue-tufted head of Orlan. Its lips move and her voice booms out, endlessly reading the same passages of Kristeva and Artaud we heard in the operating theatre. The initial effect is stunning, a sharp restaging of a Victorian illusionist’s mirror trick, known as The Sphinx. But illusions are only meant to be fleeting and after a few minutes, I can work out how it’s done. But then, don’t all Orlan’s ideas work best in theory? Is it necessary to try to make the world flesh?

First a wire, then a glimpse of leg, then a familiar ringed hand, sneak out from behind the mirror. Lost in the sound of her own voice, Orlan reads on, as oblivious to her exposure as the Wizard of Oz in his Emerald City.

Totally Wired! continues to 13 May (0171-930 3647)

THE SUNDAY REVIEW



Some 45 years ago, Eve Arnold took her first steps towards greatness, photographing Harlem fashions. Now you can see those pictures again

God bless you, Mrs Leigh... Germaine Bedell on a different 70th birthday

Plus: David Melfior bares his soul to Peter Conrad

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

MUSIC Acis and Galatea, QEH, London

Nick Kimberley applauds the passing moments of drama in a musically poised account of Handel's pastoral masque

Acadianism was an intellectual disease of 18th-century Parisians, and music often gave form to its pastoral idylls. No wonder baroque has become the National Trust's Ambient (country) House. I, for one, can only take so many warbling nymphs and swains, but Handel's *Acis and Galatea* is witty and, of course, superbly musical. It benefits from being staged: I recall a pro-am production in a community centre, where the building's faceless modernity made the perfect foil for the libretto's "purling streams and bubbling fountains".

There are some for whom the period-instrument movement is mere theme-park pastoral, but they're fighting a losing battle. At the Queen Elizabeth Hall on Wednesday, Trevor Pinnock directed his English Concert in a soberly unstaged performance of Handel's masque, although the faintest whiff of theatre occasionally permeated the hall. As Hans Peter Blochwitz rose to deliver Acis' "Where shall I seek the charming fair?" he peered longingly around, imploring the "kind genius of the mountains" to point him towards his beloved Galatea. There were claps of many

respect between Acis and Rufus Müller's Damon, but Barbara Bonney's Galatea, some distance away from her singing parlour, seemed determined not to acknowledge that *Acis and Galatea* tells its story dramatically. Even as she and Blochwitz trilled and cooed "Happy we! Thou art my bliss, thou art my joy!" Bonney ignored Acis' every loving glance.

The mood changed with the arrival of the lustful giant Polyphemus. Jeremy White suddenly rose from the backstage depths and, feet planted like a defiant rugby forward, bellowed, "I rage, I melt, I burn!" In the process, he seemed to melt Bonney's frosty demeanour. As Polyphemus apostrophised her with his monstrously overblown "O ruddier than the cherry," Galatea turned away disdainfully – a move which, naturally, only further inflamed the giant's blustery ardour. Such tiny details of byplay added to the audience's pleasure, which is surely the point.

Pinnock has been taking his players through this repertoire for decades, and, with the ensemble reduced to chamber proportions, they performed

with graceful panache. With the theorbo producing wonderfully tiny clangour, especially in the recitatives, and outstanding contributions from oboist Paul Goodwin, the sound was pliant, pointing up the rhythms without over-emphasis. The chorus moved easily from the gentle humour of "Oh, the pleasure of the plains!" through to the restrained joy of advising Galatea that Acis has become part of the water supply.

The soloists sang from memory (although all but Jeremy White had the music for use in emergency). Bonney's sweet vibrato was more prominent than I remember, but the tone was as pure, the ornamentation as decorous as ever. Blochwitz sang with a better English accent than Handel apparently possessed, and with a pleasing ache in the voice; his control over Handel's ornate lines was exact. Müller's light tenor fell easily on the ear, while White managed to be comical without sacrificing musicality. As the music died away on a note of ambiguous rejoicing, the silence in the hall spoke volumes for the quality of the audience's involvement.

Next week on the Arts pages

MONDAY: "First she walked on my back, then she cracked my neck": the pianist Gwendolyn Mok recalls the massage that almost curtailed her career

WEDNESDAY: Jasper Rees meets Renay Rye, Dennis Potter's personal choice as director of his two last series (*Kanok*, above)

THURSDAY: Nick Coleman enters the ring with a boxing professor

FRIDAY: Mark Wareham on the return of Michael Barrymore

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Writing with the other hand

Chekhov's detective mystery, Wordsworth's travel guide, Henry James's Sci-Fi thriller — the recesses of literature are full of uncharacteristic productions by canonical writers. Paul Binding looks at some fascinating creative one-offs, unlikely collaborations and curious triumphs

Literary history is full of intriguing projects that never came off. Lewis Carroll once wrote to Arthur Sullivan, suggesting himself as librettist. He'd been disgusted by the song in *HMS Pinafore* in which the Captain declares: "Though bother it I may / Occasionally say, / I never use a big, big D..." Carroll told Sullivan he was prostituting himself by setting words like these to music. He himself would have produced something more lyrical, more — one supposes — childlike.

Far more difficult to imagine is the collaboration Henry James proposed to HG Wells (whose work he admired passionately) on science fiction about Martians. Or the libretto offered by Dylan Thomas to Stravinsky about the recovery of humanity after its destruction in nuclear war. Stravinsky considered it "certainly a beautiful idea", but was, perhaps understandably, never convinced that Thomas had really thought it through.

Behind even the most unlikely of these plans a profound truth surely stands revealed: that creativity exists in the human mind before its channelling into specific forms, and that these are often dictated by the prevalent ideas and conditions of the times. Indeed this creativity pre-dates the subjects on which it will exercise itself, and which with hindsight seem most suited to its individual constitution.

Some writers obviously exhibit the free flowing nature of creativity more notably than others: DH Lawrence, for instance, whose fine strong plays and fascinating travel books tend to get pushed behind his fiction and poetry, themselves very various in form. Angus Wilson, on the other hand, was a prose fiction writer *par excellence*. His one full-length imaginative work away from the medium, a play entitled *The Mulberry Bush*, though dealing with the characteristic subject of the inadequacies of high-minded liberals, lacks any real feeling for the form. Consequently people and situations seem to be struggling to find their way back to a novel where they would have been treated far better.

The Parnassian library is full of unexpected works by canonical writers. Many of us go to the Lake District armed with Wordsworth's poems, but few of us take with us his once-popular *Guides to the Lakes* (1810, revised 1835) in which he advises us what walks to make and gives out detailed topographical, historical and even geological information. Those wanting a lively biography of Christ would not immediately think of Dickens, but his *Life of Our Lord* (first published in book form in 1936) bears witness to the New Testament Christianity he always professed. And who, thinking about detective fiction, would let the mind stray to Chekhov, famous (even remembering the shot at the end of *The Seagull*) for stories and plays where nothing happens? Yet *The Shooting Party* (1884) not only belongs to this category, but anticipates one of its most famous specimens, Agatha Christie's *Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, which created such a furore when it was published.

Some writers, of course, turn to a different genre from their usual work — and thus to a different imaginative or intellectual mood — but succeed completely, so much so that these productions cast new light on a creativity we thought we knew well.

Thomas Hardy was asked by an American magazine, *Youth's Companion*, to write an adventure story for its readers, and he spent the summer of 1883 complying with this

request before going on with *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. *Our Exploits at West Poley* is told by Leonard, 13, who comes to stay early in the autumn in the Somerset village of West Poley with his aunt, a farmer's widow, and her son Steve. Steve is an adventurous, imaginative lad, and takes his cousin right into the bowels of one of the nearby Mendip Hills, to show him a remarkable subterranean stream. And then the idea comes to them: why shouldn't they change its course to facilitate their climbing inside the cave? They set to, and do this, only to find later that day they have affected the outside world. Their own village of West Poley finds its stream (which turns its all-important mill) diminishing to the merest trickle; the neighbouring and rival village of East Poley on the other hand finds itself blessed at last with running water. What is to be done? For a time the two boys, keeping their cave activities secret, enjoy what appear to others as life-and-death power over the two communities and the land itself (and very funny these scenes are). But they get their come-uppance when they find themselves trapped inside the hill, and the subterranean waters begin to rise alarmingly. *Our Exploits at West Poley* has a robustness and a daylight quality (for all the underground setting of so much of it) that reveal a usually hidden side of Hardy's imagination. Its excitement derives from its conveyance of the power of unbridled nature and the folly of human interference with it — an even apter theme for our times than for Hardy's.

The lyric poem and the short story have sufficient closeness of relation for a writer to be rarely tempted to both. Yet Stephen Spender's collection of stories *The Burning Cactus* (1936), if not the equal of his poems of the period, show him achieving certain insights — into tensions within disintegrating western society, into the psychology of persons acted on by the strain of contemporary events — that could not quite find their way into his poetry then. In the illness of the central figure of "the dead island", the European situation is manifest: "In him is incarnated the moment when a civilisation really begins to lose grip, when violence becomes an end in itself, history rushes, the boundaries of nations alter so rapidly that there is an inflation in the printing of maps." But the quieter stories are no less successful, and point to the limpid sober gentleness of some of Spender's last published poems.

JR Ackerley's graceful, colloquial but nonetheless mannered prose style, with its affinities to Graham Greene and Isherwood, is a long way from a poet's approach to language. Yet Ackerley did write poems, *Micheldever and Other Poems* (1952), and among them is one, "Missing", first written in 1942, of which Ackerley made at least five versions. It seems to have haunted him. Born of a compassionate anger at the way lives were swallowed in the war machine, to be ruined if not destroyed, it begins in all versions with a casual-sounding statement of bewilderment, "We never knew what became of him, that was so curious," and ends with an impassioned yet movingly simple statement, "But he was my friend, and that was the way he died." The stanzas Ackerley found the most difficult to write compare the disappeared man with an insect, unmissed apparently by either its creator or its fellows, and reveals at an earlier stage his now famous feeling for the creature-world: "The life and the tiny delight, the sublime fabrication / Of colour, mechanics and



The odd couple: Dylan Thomas's projected collaboration with Stravinsky (inset) never came off despite it being "a beautiful idea"

form, I care nothing for that, / I am man with his mind, the master, the lord of creation, / This beetle has got in my way, I lower my foot." The verbal wrestling, the insistent pained rhythm invade the mind.

Richard Hughes's reputation rests on his minor classic of childhood, *A High Wind in Jamaica*, and his magnificent unfinished chronicle of Britain and Hitler's Germany, *The Human Predicament*. But he started off, a precocious young man, as a dramatist, and by request of the BBC initiated the whole genre of radio drama. *Danger* (1924) was written "for effect by sound only...to be the first 'listening play', an experiment in a new medium, which has since been considerably developed".

Like Hardy's boys' story, it takes place underground, in a gallery in a Welsh coalmine. The lights have gone out: the English visitors are stumbling in a pitch-darkness like the descent of blindness. The waters are rising, and an explosion means that three of them are trapped. Jack and Mary, a young couple in love, and an older man of 60, Bax. In what they know could be their last minutes the trio test out and articulate their feelings about dying and death, running the gamut of disbelief, pluck, humour, despair, resignation, courage, and all in a shorter space of time as the events would take in reality. Rescue does come but not all three survive. The last moments have a power and a pathos that

could not be so effective in any other medium but this then-new one.

Lastly a massive work of non-fiction, JB Priestley's *Literature and Western Man*. The recent West End revival of *An Inspector Calls* may have sent Priestley's stock up somewhat, but his reputation understandably lingers on of someone perhaps a little too content with his northern bluntness, his very English pragmatic form of socialism. *Literature and Western Man* (1960) relates, however, to the most serious and imaginative aspects of Priestley's best plays, but even so may come as a surprise.

Profoundly influenced by Jung, Priestley presents Western society as dislocated by its loss of religion, yet unable to satisfy itself with willed or retreatist creeds, as being more and more in need of healing by works of the imagination that can dig deep into the psyche and the collective unconscious, yet with its arts yearly more bastardised by the demands of commerce and by the rifts in the reading public. He argues for an eternal balance between the male and the female principles. The book is particularly good on German and American writers — indeed, its generous accounts of Scott Fitzgerald, Willa Cather and Thomas Wolfe led to their British re-issue.

And then one learns that Willa Cather wrote poems, and that Fitzgerald and Wolfe wrote plays. What can they be like?

The Icarus tendency

Peter Parker looks for a conclusion in Sebastian Faulks's three-part anthem of doomed youth

Sebastian Faulks was prompted to write this intriguing biographical triptych after reading Calvin Trillin's *Remembering Danny*, the account of an American golden boy who came to dust well before his time. Danny's downfall, it seems, stemmed from his homosexuality, which in the climate of the late 1950s he found difficult to accept. "The book made me think that young or short lives are more sensitive indicators of the pressure of public attitudes than lives lived long and crowned with honours," Faulks writes in an introductory note. He has chosen three highly gifted men, from three different generations, who briefly soared above the heads of their contemporaries before plummeting to their early deaths.

In 1921, at the age of 19, Christopher Wood set off for Paris with the intention of becoming, as he boyishly put it, "the greatest painter that has ever lived". He pursued this end with the help of Tony Gandarillas, a wealthy Chilean diplomat and patron of the arts, who provided the most sustaining relationship of Wood's life, but also introduced him to opium.

Wood's work began to gain him a considerable reputation, and he found a measure of personal happiness with a woman called Frosca Munster, but he threw himself under a train at the age of 29. What precisely drove him to his death remains a mystery. It seems that he had been overworking and taking dangerous quantities of opium. But one suspects there may also have been a destructive tension between his highly conventional background and his ambitions as an artist. Though he lived the life of a Twenties French bohemian, he maintained the appearance and mannerisms of the sort of young Englishman more likely to be wielding a golf club than a paintbrush.

Richard Hillary grew up in the Thirties, was influenced by TE Lawrence, and joined the

The Fatal Englishman: Three Short Lives by Sebastian Faulks, Hutchinson, £16.99



Flaws of temperament: left to right, Wood, Hillary and Woffenden

shot down over the North Sea in 1940, he was saved by the skill of the surgeon AH McDermott, and wrote his autobiography, *The Last Enemy*, while convalescing. This faintly mystical story of a callow youth transformed by sacrifice had enormous appeal for the reading public; but those who knew Hillary remained sceptical. His close friend Geoffrey Page, who expressed himself "surprised a supercilious bastard like you could produce something like this", thought the transfiguration described in the book glib: "In my opinion, you're still as bloody conceited as ever."

Faulks suggests that Hillary returned to flying, against the advice of his doctors, out of some First World War sense of camaraderie, and he draws unhelpful comparisons with Wilfred Owen. His account, however, leads one to conclude that it was Hillary's bloody conceit, his indestructible arrogance, that made him insist upon flying Blenheims, even after experience had confirmed that his catastrophically damaged hands could not properly control such lumbering aircraft. He shortly crashed in his death, taking a har-

Although very much of the Sixties, Jeremy Woffenden might have stepped out of the pages of early Evelyn Waugh. Witty, charming and very good company, he was widely acclaimed as the cleverest man of his generation. In spite of being flagrantly homosexual, he was sent by the *Daily Telegraph* as a correspondent to Moscow — with predictable results. Set up and snapped *in flagrante*, Woffenden was blackmailed by the KGB, who, Faulks believes, were happily aware that his father was the author of the eponymous Report (as yet unimplemented) into homosexual offences. It was the British and American intelligence services that did for Woffenden, however, putting intolerable pressure upon someone who was in any case unbalanced by alcoholism.

Faulks originally intended to call his book *The Artist, the Airman and the Spy*. That title also suggests, however, that these three men were in some way emblematic of their century, perhaps, or of their country. The eventual title, *The Fatal Englishman*, re-emphasises this, hinting at a cohesive subject to

Though Faulks is at pains not to draw together the separate threads into some neat pattern, unifying themes gradually emerge. All three men were good-looking, highly individual products of the English public-school system; all three had closer relationships with their mothers than with their fathers, all three had high opinions of themselves (mostly justified); all three were driven by some form of inner demon and were careless of their own lives.

The shared features of their stories are vital to Faulks's book: without them, it remains a collection of three not especially distinguished biographical essays. What the form dictates is surely something a little more virtuosic than these perfectly decent, very readable but very conventional accounts. We are left to draw our own conclusions, one of which is that while Faulks's subjects were undoubtedly moulded by their times, their individual falls had more to do with private than public pressures. What proved fatal to these Englishmen were the particular flaws of temperament each car-

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The sage in the aquarium

Brilliant, logomaniacal and self-absorbed, Bertrand Russell led a life of intellectual rejection and social bed-hopping. By John Campbell

Bertrand Russell: The Spirit of Solitude, by Ray Monk, Cape, £25

Because he lived so long we tend to think of Bertrand Russell as a very old man. Many of us grew up with the image of the ancient sage squatting defiantly in Trafalgar Square. He died in 1970, aged 97, an almost disembodied spectral intelligence stranded from another age. To his dying day he railed against nuclear weapons and the Vietnam war. But longevity lends a sort of sainthood even to the most determined subversive, and he died loaded with honours from a Nobel Prize for Literature to the Order of Merit.

More than half a century earlier he had been hounded from Cambridge for opposing the First World War and imprisoned for insulting the Americans. (Consistency was not always Russell's hallmark but in this respect it was impressive). And even then he was in his forties. This first volume of Ray Monk's new biography covers only the first half of Russell's life, ending in 1921 with his second marriage (two more still to come) and the birth of his first child. But already the scale of it is stupendous.

Russell was one of those people who wrote almost continuously; he lived his life on paper. His published writings – on philosophy, politics and social organisation – are nothing beside his letters, some 60,000 of them, mostly intimately autobiographical, plus journals and a number of attempts at thinly disguised fiction. Monk compares him to Virginia Woolf; but the only comparable logomaniac over such a lifespan is Shaw – with the difference that Shaw's verbosity was poured outward upon the world, whereas Russell's private writings are all about himself.

The raw material for biography here is unequalled and almost overwhelming. If it can ever be possible to reconstruct from day to day the mind of another human being, Russell has left his biographer that opportunity. Hitherto Monk's predecessors – most recently Ronald

Clark in 1975 and Caroline Moorehead in 1992 – have barely scratched the surface. Ray Monk has dug deep and – quite rightly – quotes extensively. The result is frequently appalling: Russell's self-righteousness is repellent, his self-loathing painful, his self-deception comic. His utter self-absorption is staggering but ultimately, Monk persuades us, tragic. He sought love with a bewildering catalogue of women, he tried desperately to love humanity. But he always felt alone. He once likened himself to a fish in an aquarium, trying to make contact but unable to communicate. All he could ever see in the glass was his own reflection.

Ray Monk is qualified as no previous biographer of Russell has been by the fact that he understands the philosophy. His biography of Wittgenstein was highly praised for humanising that most intractable genius; and one of the most poignant strands of this book is his account of the Russell-Wittgenstein relationship, in which their original roles of teacher and pupil were reversed to the point where Wittgenstein, in 1913, torpedoed the whole basis of Russell's logical system. Non-specialist readers will find Monk's exposition of Russell's mathematical philosophy difficult, if not meaningless. But Monk understands it and, more important, he is able to convey both the sense of struggle at the very limits of the intellect and the importance to Russell of his quasi-religious search for ultimate truths through mathematics, so that we can feel the devastating impact of the discovery that Wittgenstein – far from building on his work, as he had imagined – had demolished it.

Russell was repeatedly let down by those who he persuaded himself shared his deepest beliefs. It was the story of his intellectual life: he suffered another devastating rejection in 1915 at the hands of DH Lawrence, whose mystical instinct-worship he briefly embraced in a deluded



Love, again: a relaxed Bertrand Russell with his third wife, Patricia Spence, and second son, Courand, at home in 1937

Photograph: Hulton Getty

attempt to escape from barren intellectualism. Still more it was the story of his love life.

Obsessed with sex, and as desperate to lose his virginity as the most pimply adolescent, he first contracted the most inappropriate possible marriage to a strait-laced American Quaker, Mrs Pearsall Smith, under the fantastic illusion that she was an apostle of free love. Having realised his mistake, he subjected her to nine years of callous and priggish cruelty before abandoning her for Otholine Morrell, whom he almost as hopelessly misjudged. Otholine loved him in her way – though found him physically repellent – but she also loved a lot of other people, including her husband, whom she refused to leave. (Compulsively unfaithful himself, Russell was nevertheless furiously intolerant of any hint of infidelity in his women). Their bizarre affair lasted six years, during which he broke the heart of at least one other – another American, Helen Dudley, whom he persuaded to come to England to marry him and then rejected the moment she arrived – and toyed fatally with the affections of another, Vivien Eliot. On Monk's account Russell was as responsible as her husband for Vivien's breakdown and commitment to an asylum, from which she never emerged; and the evidence is that he knew it.

Then there was Constance Mables (the actress Colette O'Neil), another married woman for whom he conceived a mismatched passion: she refused to give up her profession and refused him children, which was what he now wanted more than anything. Dora Black, a free-thinking New Woman straight out of HG Wells, was incompatible in several other ways, but she was willing to bear his children, though preferably without being married. Comically the great radical was concerned that the heir to the Russell earldom (his elder brother had no sons) should be legitimate: so against her principles and five months pregnant, Dora became his second wife.

Does this serial bed-hopping sound contemptible or absurd? It is a measure of Monk's achievement that it does not read so. Through the medium of his letters to all these different women (and theirs to him) he manages to make Russell's quest for his ideal woman part of his wider intellectual odyssey. What he always wanted was a woman who would share and help

him in his work, which was just what all the women he was attracted to would not do. He was torn all his life between intellect and emotion. He was passionate in his philosophy, but curiously cerebral in his analysis of his emotions. It was during his years of miserable celibacy with Alys that he did his hardest mathematical work. In pursuit of sexual fulfilment with Otholine (and after Wittgenstein's blow to his intellectual confidence) he abandoned abstract philosophy and sought to engage with the real world. But nothing satisfied his demon.

In the end, for all his desire to believe in something, scepticism kept breaking through. In 1920, like other credulous Western intellectuals, he went to Russia to inspect the new Soviet utopia. Where Shaw and the Webbs saw a higher civilisation, however, Russell saw only tyranny. The experience of Russian Communism, he wrote pathetically, only proved that "kindness and tolerance are worth all the creeds in the world".

A more homespun philosopher reached the same conclusion the year before Russell died: "All you need is love." But poor old Bertie never found it.

Dandies in dissolving times

A new collection of essays celebrates genius in exile and culture in the midst of squalor. By Peter Popham

The reason Ian Buruma is worth reading about the East is that he has strong and definite tastes. He is as far removed as possible from the average travel writer, flitting from place to place, armour-plated with irony and condescension. Buruma does not flit: he spent years and years in Japan, more years based in Hong Kong. And in a new collection of essays, this writer, whose chief failing till now has been an air of rather chilly superiority, allows us to come closer than in any of his previous work to his humanity.

He does this by showing us what he likes. Roughly half the essays in *The Missionary and the Libertine* are about people, and several of them are about the writers and film directors Buruma admires. It is a

connoisseur's list: the Japanese novelist Junichiro Tanizaki; Satyajit Ray, the Bengali film director; Nirad Chaudhuri, the Indian historian; VS Naipaul; and a largely forgotten turn-of-the-century Dutch novelist called Louis Couperus.

Through his meditations on the works of these men, Buruma allows us to see what it is, emotionally and intellectually, that has drawn and held him to the East. Certain key words emerge over and over again: decadence, dandyism, patrician, elitism, *déraciné*. All Buruma's heroes emerge from, and are beneficiaries of, literary cultures of immense wealth and sophistication. But none can escape the curse (or ambiguous blessing) of living in these inter-

esting times, when all such cultures are in dissolution.

Tanizaki, Ray and the rest achieve greatness by neither succumbing to vulgarity nor scurrying back into their libraries and slamming the door, but by fashioning their works in full sight and knowledge of the modern world and the absurdity of their position in it. The result is Buruma's favourite word, "dandyism". Of Ray and his background, he writes, "Calcutta somehow managed to wear its decadence with a certain amount of grace; the anomaly of high culture in the midst of squalor is a kind of dandyism."

It is tempting to see Buruma's veneration of these figures as a way of meditating on his own work and potential, a quest for

The Missionary and the Libertine by Ian Buruma

Faber, £16.99

masters. If, in Howard Jacobson's formulation, the rootless Jew is the prototype of every modern hero, someone like Naipaul is the type of the modern heroic writer: freighted with culture, but spiritually always on the road. By his own long sojourns abroad, his marriage to a Japanese, and an education divided between Holland and Japan, Buruma has rendered himself *déraciné*, too: hence his sympathy for those who have taken that condition and produced greatness from it. But part

of the problem with deracination is to know who exactly you are writing for. If, like Naipaul, you are obsessive and serious enough, by writing for yourself alone you write for the world. Buruma's case, however, is rather different.

Part of the time – writing for example about the "suicidal dandy" Yukio Mishima, or the relationship between political radicalism and pornography in the work of another oriental dandy, the film director Nagisa Oshima – he is writing, one feels, for his own pleasure, and one shares in it. But for half of this book – long pieces on the Seoul Olympics, on the Philippines or on Singapore – he is writing about subjects that, interesting in a journalistic sense, do not engage him

at so deep a level.

It is in these very competent pieces that one senses the absence of an audience with whom Buruma has a relationship. Most were written for the *New York Review of Books*; but Buruma has never lived in the United States, and has no political engagement with it. He is not, like Naipaul, strenuously talking to himself; nor, like say Christopher Hitchens, is he firing off polemics, trying to change people's minds.

Buruma tries to compensate for this lack by a tone of dry, sometimes supercilious authority – which is a pity, because, as this book shows, there is a warm, beating heart in there. One would like him to follow its urgings more often.

All you need to know about the books you meant to read

by Gavin Griffiths

CATCHER IN THE RYE (1951) by J D Salinger

Plot: Teenager Holden Caulfield's account of two days wandering across New York City, snapped out in peppy vernacular. Expelled from his stuck-up "prep" school, "lonesome" and allergic to "phonies", Holden decides to vanish for a bit. He has never recovered from the guilt at the death of his younger brother Allie and wears the burden throughout his comic/absurd adventures. He has a series of sexual encounters from which he emerges both silly and perceptive. Sneaking home to see his sister Phoebe's day-dream is of "thousands of little kids" playing in a field of rye, by the edge of a cliff. His job would be to protect them from danger. After a breakdown he is sent to an institution, where he is flooded with compassion for phonies.

Theme: The teenager as existential anti-hero.

Style: The snazzy demotic can be both banal and funny; yet there are hair-line traces of pathos as the language cracks under the pressure of feeling.

Strengths: Given the futility of Holden's quest, it could be gloomy. But the book skips along.

Weakness: Holden's *naïveté* can lurch into *cuteness*. The novel does not resolve his dilemma.

What they thought then: Coming just after the war, the book's condemnation of adult posturing hit precisely the right note.

What we think now: A nice present for 15-year-olds. The underpinning philosophical alienation is stated over.

Responsible for: Making people take adolescence seriously. Inspiring John Lennon's killer, he thought Lennon "a phoney".

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Terribly terrible and wonderfully wonderful

Geoff Dyer finds a personal account of manic depression spoilt by gush and ceramic bumble bees

Since antiquity," wrote William Styron in *Darkness Visible*, "in the lament of Job, in the choros of Sophocles and Aeschylus, chroniclers of the human spirit have been wrestling with a vocabulary that might give proper expression to the desolation of melancholy." It might be a perennial theme but as the success of Styron's "memoir of madness" made clear, it has recently become a lucrative one too. What Peter D Kramer – author of *Listening to Prozac* – in an excellent recent essay called "autopathography" is the growth genre of our time.

From a publisher's point of view, Kay Redfield Jamison was a doubly attractive catch in that she is "a world authority" on the manic-depressive illness from which she suffers. While clambering up the greasy pole of academic advancement, she was also engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the very demons whose study she was mastering. Lurching from frenzied distraction to paralysing despair, she had to reconcile her professional certainty that manic depression was an illness – which could be controlled by medication – and her personal reluctance to treat it as such. Throughout her life

An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness by Kay Redfield Jamison, Picador £15.99

times exhilarating contraries of illness and the tolerable yet deadened normalcy provided by lithium. So far, so moving. But let us be quite clear: to suppose that Jamison's book is somehow entitled to whatever plaudits, concessions and sympathy are appropriate to the life it records is to succumb to chronic critical delusion.

As Styron noted, conveying the experience of madness brings language to the edge of inexpressibility. It is understandable, then, that in recounting periods of severe illness Jamison should write of "a pitiless, unrelenting pain that affords no window of hope... and no respite from the cold undercurrents of thoughts and feelings that dominate the horribly restless nights of despair." The problem with writing like this is that it deadens where it seeks to accentuate, becomes a form of hysterical rhetoric.

Similarly, there is only so much terribly that words like "terri-

terms of Jamison's stylistic antinomies, being ill is terribly terrible and being well is wonderfully wonderful. What Tennyson called "the cruel madness of love" is, not surprisingly, "wonderful and terrible".

In other words, it is not only in extremis that Jamison's language struggles to make its mark: it is pretty hard pressed to do justice to the quotidian. Perhaps all her academic tenure-mongering has taken its toll, for she often lapses into unconscious resumé prose: "I have written extensively in medical and scientific journals..." It is natural to thank her husband for being "unbelievably wonderful" in the acknowledgements, but this alerts us to how much of the book is written in the style of the acknowledgements. Particularly intense moments call for a mix of acknowledgement and resumé-speak: "Throughout the setting up and running of the clinic I was fortunate to have the support of the chairman of my department..."

Simultaneously breathless and anodyne, this style comes to a head when Jamison spends a year at Oxford. She finds her college "incredibly beautiful", her suite of rooms "lovely" and the dons "remarkably interesting". At

rein to her much professed love of music, poetry, literature and opera.

Jamison makes no bones about the fact that during her periods of mania and depression she makes intolerable demands on the people around her; by the time of her Oxford fellowship, I found myself wholly on the side of the less than wonderful doctor whom Jamison "seemed especially to annoy" even during her intervals of normality. If we're being utterly frank, Jamison's precious, self-exalting ideas of perfect evenings – "long dinners and fine wines", culminating in discussions of "literature and music over late-night coffee and port" – came pretty close to driving me mad.

I don't want to be unsympathetic, but can anyone have any feeling for writing and still express their most intense emotions in sentences beginning "To this day..."? "To this day I keep a large ceramic bumble bee in my office." "To this day I have neither reopened nor reread any of his letters." "To this day, I cannot hear that piece of music without feeling surrounded by the beautiful sadness of that evening." My favourite, though, is this flight of air-miles fancy: "Since that day, whenever possible, I fly British Airways." I

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Watching the detectives

Susanna Moore has described it as "a little bit of porno". The critics have talked of a new Jean Rhys. Sarah Spankie tests a sassy thriller

Frannie, the narrator of Susanna Moore's fourth novel, *In the Cut*, is aroused by risk. "I don't usually go to a bar with one of my students," she announces. "It is almost always a mistake." But Cornelius, a faintly disturbing character who attends her creative writing class, is having trouble with irony. He wants to see her about his term paper and they duly go to the Red Turtle to discuss it. As it turns out, Frannie is right: this is not a good move. It is the first in a series of small acts of recklessness, moments of defiance, where our protagonist fails to respect conventional boundaries and ends up in trouble.

Searching for the bathroom at the Red Turtle, Frannie blunders into a basement room where she observes a red-haired woman performing oral sex on a man. Frannie can't see his face, which is in shadow, but she knows that he can see hers. She notices a tattoo – the three of spades – on the inside of his left wrist. She also notices that the redhead's technique ("with a hitch of the chin like a dog nuzzling his master's hand") is quite different from her own. Later, the woman is discovered with her throat cut and her body disarticulated.

The novel tracks the relationship between Frannie and James Malloy, the homicide detective who is investigating the murder. In Frannie, Moore has created a striking and memorable heroine: intelligent, brave, watchful and sexually adventurous. On the surface, her life seems painfully circumscribed: she is 34, lives alone in two rooms on the third floor of a brownstone on Washington Square, teaches teenagers "of what is called low achievement and high intelligence" and is writing a book about regionalisms and dialects "including the eccentricities of pronunciation". She has no trouble with irony.

One of her projects is a dictionary of New York street slang, the street being the place where everything happens – music, drug deals, language, danger. Her dictionary is fluid, as the phrases enjoy only a brief cur-

In the Cut
by Susanna Moore
Picador, £12.99

rency, and mean one thing in Brooklyn and something different in the Bronx, but, for Frannie, "the words themselves – in their wit, exuberance, mistakenness and violence – are thrilling to me". We learn a number of colourful terms for sex and guns, and for body parts, including several for the vagina: "virginia, n. (as in 'he penetrated my virginia with a hammer') snapper n. brasole n. (from the Sicilian? *bresaola*? cured meat?)"

The title of the novel is in this sequence. "In the cut. From vagina. A place to hide. To hedge your bet. But someplace safe, someplace free from harm." Through her passion for language, Frannie attempts to impose order on the loose squalor of her surroundings, to connect herself to something or someone, but, like her friend Pauline, she has no romantic expectations, no domestic dreams.

Yet for all her cool independence, she cannot quite ignore "the old longing to be chosen, pursued, fought for, called away". Spinsterhood is a spectre: "I hope I don't turn into Miss Burgess in her good Donegal tweed suit, her snappish red turtleneck, the dog's own tweed coat beginning to fray where it rubbed against his tartan leash. Summers in Maine with her companion Miss Gerrold in a cottage fragrant with mould. It doesn't seem that bad, now that I'm imagining it."

Sketching on the rocks seems an improbable destiny for a woman who can fall for Detective Malloy ("Cops go through girlfriends like they go through wet catlets," he warns her), flirt with his partner Rodriguez ("All you really need is two tits, a hole and a heartbeat," he muses), and be seduced by the macho crudity of their cop culture. "I reminded myself that Pauline says they



Susanna Moore: cool independence and moments of defiance

have to despise us in order to come near us, in order to overcome their terrible fear of us. She has some very romantic ideas. I tried hard, but there must have been something a little pinched in my face, a momentary faltering, because Rodriguez said to me, 'You're one of those broads, right? You know, man, one of those feminist broads.' Working a lot of gender into one sentence."

As she embarks on a risky liaison with Malloy (their sexual encounters are described in breathtakingly graphic detail), Frannie wilfully neglects to attend to the

warning signs – the erratic behaviour of her friend John Graham, the stalking activities of her student Cornelius, her lover's tattoo – although she keeps a list, of course, in her head, on the edge of consciousness.

Moore has written a brilliant, pacy, intense, erotic thriller, packed with beautifully observed detail, humming with melancholy. Like Frannie, the reader will find no solace. The ending is horrifyingly gruesome, so harrowing, that Brett Easton Ellis, no boy scout, said it was the most shocking thing he'd ever read.

Too much wailing in the backstreets

A tale of middle-class angst and schizophrenic ramblings leaves Harriet Paterson unmoved

The title of Leslie Glaister's new book suggests all sorts of titillation not delivered by its content, indeed much of its framework is deliberately unappealing. It is set in a back street in Sheffield, where two women running from their past find themselves as neighbours: one an ageing spinster, the other a young wife-mother-photographer. Although, or perhaps because, Glaister lives in Sheffield, the city never becomes a living backdrop but instead is used purely as a metaphor for the sort of place that no one looking for you would ever dream of trying, a reference point for mundanity, and featurelessness.

It soon becomes apparent that neither of the female characters lies within the reader's comfort zone: both have spiky and selfish personalities which rebuff any temptation to slip into sympathy with them. Fearing involvement, they have little desire to interact with each other, but reluctantly drift into the semblance of a relationship.

Inis is unadmirable in a number of ways, some but not all of which she acknowledges. An only child, she is pretty much incapable of love, until a baby son comes along. She is then left with two problems: obsessive love for her child and an aversion to sex with her doctor husband. Eventually she walks out, leaving the child alone in the house.

Meanwhile, there is Trixie Bell next door (does Leslie Glaister think she's Paula Yates?), an 85-year-old Salvation Army veteran with multiple schizophrenia or similar, whose warring secondary personalities aren't her basic self. In a somewhat formulaic polarity of male and female, harlot and virgin, Trixie contains both the adopted ego of her twin brother who died at birth, and the mocking and vulgar Ada, the flip side of Trixie's religious purifying fervour.

The Private Parts of Women
by Leslie Glaister
Bloomsbury, £14.99

Each is given a first-person narrative voice, until the book itself becomes a kind of mad polyphony, switching from Inis's self-pitying litany to Trixie and Co in turn, who express themselves with descending levels of coherence. When the lost boy speaks, Glaister takes the deconstruction further still, reducing the vocabulary right down and placing staccato phrases like verse on the page: "How can I out? If she does not let me out I will." This voice, the least successful of them all, a reminder of how difficult it is to portray madness convincingly in fiction.

In addition to switching between *personae*, the narrative moves in and out of the past, dealing with the early experiences of the two women. Some of the book's strongest parts are those that deal with Trixie's childhood. Her mother likes to inflict a creepy and cruel punishment on her, making her sit alone in a room staring into a warped mirror, "until you recognise the Devil, all your badness and lies". The effects of this on a small girl are compellingly communicated, providing the key to her later behaviour.

As Trixie grows rapidly madder and more turbulent, the other woman's middle-class existential angst is shown up for the self-indulgent exercise that it is, although this is not perhaps the author's intention.

Glaister's sympathy with Inis suggests that her protagonist's destructive behaviour is all justified in the greater cause of her search for herself, but personally I couldn't help feeling that her family were a lot better off without her. A dark book about two unloveable women.

Faded roses and a dash of Angostura bitters

High Anglicanism in Hammersmith? Tweeds in Metroland? The aga saga has made it to the city lights. By Shena Mackay

In 1993 Madeleine St John published a first novel of such charm that any successor was bound to provoke comments on "the hurdle of the second novel". *The Women in Black* was set in a 1950s Sydney department store, and its heroines were the uniformed sales staff of that beautifully evoked emporium. For *A Pure Clear Light*, St John, an Australian now living in London, leaves behind the certainties of that hierarchical and more innocent world for present-day Hammersmith and a middle-class cast with jobs as nebulous as their characters.

In this sly take on English middlebrow fiction, they are as smooth

A Pure Clear Light
by Madeleine St John
Fourth Estate, £12.99

as mannequins who, sensing they are not quite real, converse in dialogue like that of middle-class sitcom, and aspire to be the people in some churchy, risqué novel. Flora, a lapsed Catholic, embraces High Anglicanism, a vicar and his wife have a go at being written by Barbara Pym, and handsome twins on leave from a Mary Wesley drop in

Flora, who has "gone into business with a woman friend importing and selling third world textiles" has been married for 15 years to Simon, a director of TV drama who once dreamed of being "the Jean Renoir of *nos jours*". These are people who shop at "Horrids" and holiday in *glies* in the Perigord and use French phrases for emphasis. Their three "bright and beautiful" children are at fee-paying schools. They drink gin in the evenings and it cheers rather than depresses them, and yet they feel something is missing. Simon, who fears the "naffery" of Flora's abandoned faith conceals she may fill the void

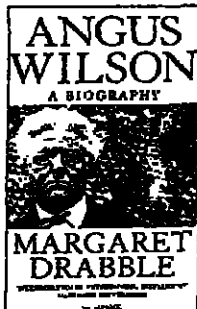
by becoming an Anglican: "Further than that I'm not prepared to go. Honestly, Flora, I mean it, the Pope and Days of Obligation and plastic Virgin Marys with light bulbs inside them..." Flora laughs and thinks, yes, "it was naff all right", but that is not the whole story, and neither is the whole wish to go any deeper. Meanwhile, the vicar's wife, assessing Flora as an "English rose, slightly faded" in "good tweeds" surmises that she will come up with "some absolutely first-rate jumble". This must be the first time "good tweeds" have had an outing since the heyday of Penguin Crime, and it's nice to see them back. Simon,

though, is having an affair with Gillian, a blonde accountant, and is torn between his desire to be with her and his love for Flora and the children who he, perforce, neglects. The novel is circular in shape, opening as Simon and Gillian are spotted in a brasserie by one of Flora's friends, retracing their affair and concluding with its end. Rose Macaulay comes to mind, too, as the spiritual concerns surface from the insouciant prose. This is a stylish clearing of the fence, and if it does not touch the heart as poignantly as the debut, its skill and humour make one anticipate the next one with pleasure.

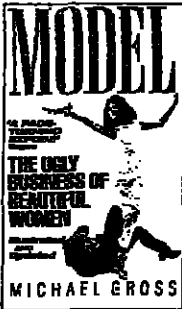
Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst

Angus Wilson: A Biography by Margaret Drabble (Minerva, £9.99). Despite its daunting bulk, this slab of a book is as piquant and engaging as its subject. Initiated into homosexuality by two elder brothers who dabbled in transvestite prostitution, Wilson's early life – war service in Bletchley Park succeeded by the richly eccentric British Museum – is of greater interest than his later success. His final years, with friends scratching round to pay for his nursing-home, are salutary for any writer.



Model by Michael Gross (Bantam, £6.99). "God... I wouldn't mind a slice of that one..." David Bailey is reported to have said on seeing Jean Shrimpton for the first time. The history of modelling is little more than that – slices all round for photographers, fashion editors, advertisers and sizzle-ball agents. Fashion journalist Michael Gross's "in-your-face" exposé of the flesh trade, with its lurid tales of underage sex, rape and drug abuse points out the many advantages of not looking like Cindy, Christie or Claudia.



Moo by Jane Smiley (Flamingo £6.99). Smiley's exquisite satire of Mid-West college life is at times so real that the whiff of stale beer and hog's manure (a smell the faculty of "Moo U" comes to know well) lingers a little too convincingly. Less sober than her previous novels, the author's portraits of Nineties academics (especially the promiscuous Timothy Monahan, professor of creative writing) are wickedly drawn, though at times the book's descriptive passages are over-dense. David Lodge couldn't have done it better.

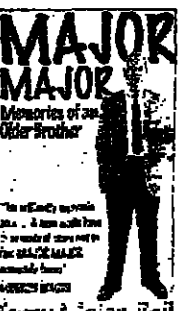


The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire Vol II by Edward Gibbon (Penguin, £15.00). From the murder in 383 of Emperor Gratian, Gibbon's majestic tale of economic triumph marred by unstable leadership rolls onward. With the division of the empire, the story is much taken with the barbarians at the gate. This volume ends by exploring the "languid belief" of the Ethiopian Christians, little changed when described by Waugh in the 1930s.

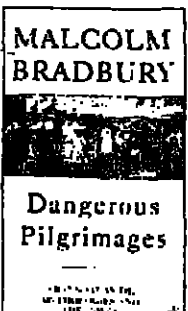


Celestine by Gillian Tindall (Minerva, £6.99). In an abandoned property at the geographical centre of France, Tindall discovered a cache of love letters dating from 1862. These fragile missives drew her into the life of publican's daughter Celestine Chaumette (1844-1933). As Tindall remarks, it was "a vertiginous stretch of time". From the isolated, almost medieval world described in the fiction of George Sand, where wolves were still a pest and fairies a part of everyday life, Celestine survived into the age of the radio and the aeroplane. Ideal *gite* reading.

Major Major by Terry Major-Ball (Warner Books, £6.99). At last, in paperback, the book that made *Private Eye*, the *Daily Telegraph* and Nicholas Soames wet themselves with glee. But Terry's reminiscences of life with the Majors are more likely to make you weep than laugh: hard times in the garden gnome business, family illnesses in Croydon and the saddest of all, Norma's failure to provide her husband with anything more than a cup of tea on the night of his leadership victory (Terry, ever the solicitous older brother, had to send out for pie and chips).



So I Am Glad by A.L. Kennedy (Vintage, £5.99). When a 300-year-old Frenchman, possibly Cyrano de Bergerac, turns up in her Glasgow flat, Jennifer (A DJ with a sore throat), decides to let him stay. In return he weans her off sado-masochistic sex, takes her to Paris and tells her she's beautiful. For once in her life she is not alone. A fantastical novel that thrives on edgy dialogue and unexpected ideas. A.L. Kennedy knows what it is to be young and depressed.



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gardening

A live decoy is by far the most effective

Ever been bitten by a magpie? I don't advise it, for the sturdy black beak with a slight hook on the end packs a tremendous nip. I know, because I have spent the past week taking live magpies out of my newly-borrowed Larsen trap and knocking them on the head.

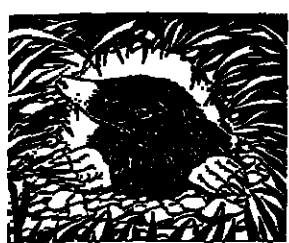
If that sounds heartless, consider how many eggs and fledglings of songbirds I must have saved. My bag of predators to date is nine, and over the next few weeks they would have been up and down the hedgerows raiding the nests of lesser species. Once you have heard a blackbird screeching as it powerlessly watches a magpie devour its babies, you do not feel very charitable towards the black-and-white robbers.

In recent years magpies have increased prodigiously, and even the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds acknowledges that they are now considered by many to be a pest species. Their success is ascribed partly to the fact that there are fewer gamekeepers to persecute them, partly to the ban on organochlorine pesticides, which means a better supply of grassland insects – a staple item in magpies' diet. Another factor is surely the increase in road traffic, and the consequent massacre of small animals and gamebirds on the road – for magpies are great opportunists and eaters of carrion.

An RSPCA leaflet gives many interesting facts about them – for instance that between 25 and 60 per cent of any local population does not breed, but remains in flocks throughout the year. Magpies live for between three and 15 years; they generally pair for life, but if one is killed, a new mate will appear within 48 hours. When food is abundant, they hoard any surplus by digging small holes in the ground with their beaks, placing their titbits in them, and covering the caches with grass, stones or leaves.

In spring the birds develop a strong territorial interest, and it is this that makes catching them easy. They cannot stick having a stranger on their patch; if they see one a combination of curiosity and aggression forces them to investigate. This compulsion to intervene makes the Larsen trap extraordinarily effective. It was devised by a Danish gamekeeper in the 1950s and, like many good ideas, it is very simple. It consists merely of a cage made of wire netting and wood, divided into two compartments, each with a separate hinged lid.

You put a live call-bird in one side, with food, water and a perch, and jam the lid of the other compartment



DUFF
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open with a collapsible rod, made of two accurately-cut pieces of dowelling set end-to-end and held in position by a spring. When an incoming bird lands on what looks like a solid perch, the rod drops away in two halves, and lets the lid snap shut.

Although the trap will work when baited with eggs or meat, a live decoy is by far the most effective, since it draws attention to itself by hopping around. One of the device's advantages is that you can quickly release any bird of the wrong species and let it go, none the worse.

The friend from whom I borrowed my trap caught 37 magpies in his garden last year, and noticed a pronounced increase in songbirds as a result. This spring he set the ball rolling by staffing the trap with one of last year's bag, fresh from the deep-freeze. This, though immobile, did the trick, and he caught 16 more.

When I brought the trap home with the latest decoy inside, its efficacy was such that I caught my first victim within five minutes. Since then I have caught an average of one a day, and the thick, fruity chattering that used to wake us up in the mornings has become a thing of the past.

Opinions vary about how long one should keep the same decoy: some people say you should despatch it every time you make a fresh capture, and use the newcomer as the call-bird instead. All I can report is that my fellow has been in captivity for a month and remains a star performer: he (if it is a he) eats well, looks well, has plenty of energy, and does not panic when humans come near.

His staple diet is a patent dogfood mix containing dried meat; he also eats corn, but I think it is important that he has some meat as well, since carrion would form part of his wild diet.

The Larsen trap is equally good for catching crows – but first you need a captive crow, and for the moment I am concentrating on magpies.

It is unpleasant to keep any wild creature in gaol, and I do not enjoy making one captive suffer for the unsocial habits of its kind.

But the thought that I am giving hundreds of songbirds a better chance of life is enough to harden my heart.



Naturalised
narcissus,
Wretham
Hedge,
Norfolk.
Photo:
Jacqui
Hirst

Welcome to the garden party

Anna Pavord celebrates Spring with a guest-list that brooks no shrinking violets

By May, I'll be panting furiously in the garden's wake shouting, "Wait for me! Wait for me!" But now in April, I can just about keep up with it. Wandering round the garden this month is like being at a party where people that you haven't seen for ages suddenly loom into view. You can put a name to them but you've forgotten exactly what they look like and how they talk. Meeting them again gives you a pleasurable sense of rediscovery. You remember why you liked their company. Or not. The equivalent of the party pooper here is the ground elder, pushing in round a juicy peony where it's not wanted and leering at the veronica close by.

Hyacinths, daffodils, early tulips and scillas are flowering better than I have ever seen them before. Perhaps this has something to do with the baking they got last summer. A good bake is certainly what tulips need – and too rarely get in this country. *Tulipa schleri* is stunning this year, brilliant crimson scarlet flowers, the petals nipping in slightly at the waist and finishing in needle-sharp points. The backs of the outer petals are washed over in greeny buff, so in bud it looks very sober. Then it flings open its petals and reveals itself as the wildly sexy flower it is, set off against leaves that are an elegant greyish green. I am nuts about it.

It is growing among clumps of columbines, not yet in flower, of course, but the foliage is good on its own at this time of the year, greyish like the tulip's and finely cut. It is not so bossy that it gets in the way of the tulips, but sets them off well, as does the quite different bronze foliage of early peonies such as *Paeonia cambesidesii*.

The leaves of this peony are much finer than those of the usual kind of garden peony, most of which have been bred from *P. lactiflora*. They are more pointed, glossier and finished on the undersides with a sumptuous red. The flower isn't as showy as you would

expect from a garden hybrid, but it is worth waiting for, emerging as a deep pink.

Most of the plant groups that give me pleasure at the moment seem to depend on the borrowed foliage of other plants that have yet to flower. Or, in the case of *Cyclamen hederifolium*, that already have flowered. These cyclamens make a broad ribbon along the front of a very shady bed under a yew tree. Without their intricately veined leaves in the background, the blue scillas among them would be much less telling. In general, bulbs rarely have good foliage and benefit enormously when grown among borrowed leaves.

Each year when the bowls of early hyacinths have finished flowering in the house, the bulbs get planted outside. I use compost rather than bulb fibre in the bowls and feed the plants when they are coming up into flower. Consequently the bulbs are not totally exhausted when they go out; they quickly build up to fighting strength and are usually in bloom again outside by the following year.

There are about a hundred of them in flower now, all of them blue or white. The pink ones seem to me as odd as a red delphinium. White hyacinths grow among white flowered variegated honesty, blue and white ones among clumps of brunnera, just brushed over now with the hazy blue of their emerging flowers.

Hyacinth white is a stark, uncompromising colour – a killer with creamy narcissus. But with green or blue the startling chalkiness of the flower is an asset. It works, too, with the clear yellow of narcissi such as 'February Gold' (way past its sell-by date this cold, late season) and 'Quail', a beautifully scented jonquil with several flowers to a stem. The stinking hellebore, *Helleborus foetidus*, gives the kind of bulk needed to fill out between a planting of these two bulbs.

Spurges also provide good backgrounds for bulbs, for the sulphurous, greeny-yellow

flowers work well with a surprisingly wide range of other colours. I have tried both pink and red tulips in front of a giant spurge, *Euphorbia wulfenii*. This year 'Rose Emperor', a Fosteriana tulip described as "cerise" filled the spot. 'Cantate', also a Fosteriana, was better – a clear zinging red.

If only the arms of the hellebore *H. coriaceus* were keener on staying upright, I'd use that as a background for tulips, too, but although the foliage is handsome and the ghostly, pale green flowerheads unselfishly willing to play a supporting role behind more flamboyant flowers, the mature stems have a fatal tendency to crash suddenly to the ground as the new growth erupts from the centre. I have used ground hugging blue *Anemone blanda* round them instead. When crashed on, they philosophically push flowers out either side of the obstruction, unfazed, unfussy.

The foliage of ground-covering geraniums hasn't developed enough yet to be of much help, but the thalictum is good and has the same greyish tones as the leaves of the aquilegia. There are some pale, greyish-pink primroses growing among the thalictums. It's a pleasant enough combination, but too twinset and pearls for my taste. A few clumps of a much darker red-purple primrose growing further up the bank would help, as a brilliant slash of lipstick might wake up a sleepy set of clothes.

The ground-covering bugle won't flower until June, but the dark, glossy bronze foliage of the variety 'Atropurpurea' has been usefully setting off the blue flowers of some dwarf iris, *Iris reticulata* 'Joyce', next to it. Having lulled me into thinking it is a Good Thing, it will now try and strangle the iris. A little bugle goes a long way. While the thin, grassy iris foliage remains above ground, staking a claim to its own lebensraum, I may remember to keep the bugle clear of it. But when the iris foliage sinks under the surface

of the soil, the bugle will be over its head in an instant.

Pulmonarias are excellent foliage plants, but at the moment they are concentrating on flowering. The best leaves come later, when the flowers have finished. Pale blue 'Frühlingsschimmel' does not earn its keep half as well as the much more richly coloured 'Lewis Palmer' which, besides being a better colour, has more vigorous, upright growth. It goes well with the leathery growths of Mrs Robb's Bonnet, the spurge, *Euphorbia robbiae*. Both grow well in shade, provided it is not too dry.

The forget-me-not 'Royal Blue Improved' (Thompson & Morgan, £1.09) is just starting to flower, excellent deep blue flowers with tiny white eyes. "Sufficient seed to raise approx 100+ plants," says the seed packet. Sufficient perhaps, if you don't have a mole playing silly games under your seedbed, as I did last summer. Seed was sown on 24 June and the plants set out in early October. They are growing with a crazed dwarf narcissus called 'Rip van Winkle', also flowering later this year than it should. This does entirely without trumpets and produces a wild double head of two-tone yellow, more like a dandelion with attitude than a daffodil. It is mad, but doesn't realise it.

Also mad, but elegantly so, are the two-tone grape hyacinths, *Muscari latifolium*, that I had forgotten I planted last autumn. Instead of the grassy foliage that accompanies the normal grape hyacinths, these emerged with a single broad leaf wrapped round a navy-blue flower, finished off unexpectedly with a pale-blue topknot. They are growing with the buff double primrose 'Sue Jarvis', backed by *Helleborus x sternii*: marbled foliage, purple stems, green pink flowers and far too much disfiguring leaf spot. This year I'll spray them with fungicide. Except that I won't. There are always too many more interesting jobs to do in the garden.

WEEKEND WORK

Prick out seedlings of vegetables such as peppers, celery and tomatoes. Put peppers and tomatoes into individual small pots. Prick out celery in trays ready for planting out next month.

Prune hardy fuchsias such as *F. magellanica*, cutting the growths down to ground level. Cut back *Perovskia atriplicifolia* (Russian sage), lavender and *Romneya coulteri* to within

a few inches of the base. Also prune *Lycaster formosus* and willows grown for their winter bark. Be patient with any shrubs you think might have been killed by the winter freeze. Even if top growth has all been cut back, you may find soon that new growth starts to spring from the base. I am still hoping that a big phloem is going to pull through in our garden. All its foliage shriv-

elled miserably this winter but, as yet, there has been no sign of new life.

Plant container-grown shrubs, climbers and herbaceous perennials while the soil is still damp. Planted now, they will have a chance to get their roots settled before drier summer weather makes this difficult.

Prune shrubs such as lavender and cotton lavender (*San-*

tolina neapolitana) by cutting back most of last year's growth. Do not cut into old wood, as new buds rarely spring from old stems. Newly planted lavender hedges especially need pruning to encourage plenty of fresh, bushy growth.

You should have dead-headed lavender last autumn. Young plants of cotton lavender respond well to hard prun-

ing, but old scraggy specimens do not. If you have an overgrown plant, it may be better to replace it with a fresh one.

Deadhead camellias, where this is feasible. The flowers have the disfiguring habit of dying on the tree. Camellias do not need regular pruning, but you can trim a bush to shape now, if it is growing in a markedly lopsided fashion.

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CUTTINGS

More on lawns. The Mowmower manufacturers Atco-Quacast, together with British Seed Houses, recently completed a survey of attitudes among 500 gardeners. They found, rather surprisingly, that even fewer gardeners (36 per cent) now compost their grass cuttings than did three years ago. We are not as green as we think. One statistic from the survey intrigues me. Forty-two per cent of West Midlands own more than one lawnmower. What can they be doing with them?

The North of England Horticultural Society is holding its spring flower show in the Valley Gardens, Harrogate, North Yorkshire from Thursday to Sunday this week. The show is home to the largest display of modern daffodils in the North and features 260 exhibitors. Open Thurs-Sat 9.30am-6pm, Sun 9.30am-4.30pm. Admission £8.50 on the first day, decreasing to £6 on Sunday.

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To advertise in this section please call Mike Glegg on 0171 293 2323.

By Jenny McClean



Less than a tenth of Britain's land surface is now woodland and a quarter of that consists of money-spinning plantations of the North American Sitka spruce. With industrialisation and intensive farming, woods were ignored or axed; more woodland has been lost in the last 40 years than in the previous millennium.

Helping to redress the balance, the Government's embryonic 200-square-mile National Forest, linking Staffordshire with Leicestershire, promises to be a "people's landscape" with ready access, largely funded with existing grants to farmers willing to add afforestation to their diversification plans. But, because Britain still imports 90 per cent of its timber, around 40 per cent of the trees will be commercial conifers. Given the choice between walking through stiff, dark rows of pine or a sized woodland with a sunlit canopy, most of us would choose the latter. (Nature does: the oak supports around 400 species of wildlife.)

The bulk of mixed woodland is on farmland where the owner may not realise the commercial and conservation value of something that has "always been there". A measly (by comparison) 300,000 hectares is ancient, or primary, woodland, such as can be seen in Hatfield Forest in Essex, whose 1,000 acres of former Royal forest are owned by the National Trust. Roaming NIT woods and land is free: funding comes largely

from membership and house, garden and car park fees.

However, a growing number of people are adopting a more hands-on approach. The FC has given grants to help establish 800 new woodlands whose owners are expected to offer free public access. Its Community Woodlands grant is in addition to its Woodland Improvement grant, which is only given where public access is granted. The latter is being taken up by members of The National Small Woods Association, a network of owners and managers whose aim is to promote good management. Members are keen on buying up small woods considered "worthless" by their owners. These small woods are a huge and largely neglected resource: half of Britain's 1.8 million acres of broadleaf trees grow in parcels of 2.5 acres or less. According to botanist and author Dr Oliver Rackham, "the value of small woods to wildlife is not necessarily reduced in proportion to their size, especially if they are ancient woods".

Amanda Giles, NSWA development director, says that uneconomic woodland is where demand is strongest, with the preferred size being between 10 and 30 acres. Values have doubled in the last 10 years with the average cost now about £1,000 per acre, rising to £2,500 for the best small woods in the South.

In partnership with the Green Wood Trust and sponsored by the Forestry Commission and the Countryside Commission, the NSWA runs Saturday courses in Shropshire, Kent and soon in East Anglia, designed to help new owners get the most from their woodland, environmentally and financially. "It's quite a tangible thing to put your money into and it meets all the green credentials," says Mrs Giles. "Most people don't expect to make much out of it and are prepared to make a loss, at least for the first few years."

The attraction, it seems, is more personal: "As well as providing a private escape, caring for a wood can lead to new interests or fulfil ambitions, such as charcoal burning, learning about wildlife, working with wood and fencing. And many owners report that it has brought them closer to the seasons."

The NSWA leaves the question of access to the individual. Mrs Giles admits that the old-style landowner still guards his privacy jealously. "But a new breed of landowner is being encouraged by the Woodland Improvement grant. Our members are keen on it because there isn't much money in timber. Also, owners used to be afraid of liability for people injured in their wood. Now we offer our own insurance scheme."

The FC's Technical Development Branch is

currently advising owners of woodland that one of the best sources of income is firewood, thanks to advances in the design of wood-fuelled boilers. A study is underway into the possibility of creating new woodlands specifically for fuelwood. One NSWA member used to spend £750 a year on oil. Now her 11-hectare wood provides all her power.

One forester in particular is working hard at increasing access and raising the FC's public profile. In the Mortimer Forest outside Ludlow, in Shropshire, warden Jeremy Gissop made friends with the "enemy" by organising the first 4x4 tracking on FC land last summer. More than 200 off-roads took part in the event, raising £4,500 for conservation projects such as dormouse boxes.

Perhaps access is the key to survival. Like our coastline, which once harboured ships and fisherman and now entertains holidaymakers, woods are going back to work.

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (01491 839766); for information on commemorative tree planting ask for Jackie Gamble, The Forestry Commission (0131-334 0303). The National Small Woods Association (01327 361387) has produced a Woodland Purchase information sheet. The Ramblers' Association (0171-582 6878).

If all goes according to plan, a small group of people from the north Dorsetshire village of Deddington will walk, spaces in hands, down the five-mile long track to the banks of the title river 'Sweat' late this year and plant the first seedlings in what will eventually become a 10-acre wood.

It will be the first of 200 new 'millennium woods' planned by The Woodland Trust to be planted and tended by local communities in England and Wales. The aim is to complete the £19m project, which is backed by grants of more than £6.5m from the Millennium Commission, by the year 2000. By then The Woodland Trust, who in its 25th year, hopes to be the owner of 1,000 woods.

'For the past few years we have been acquiring woods at the rate of about one a week,' said Trust spokeswoman Noelle Fletcher. 'The figure is now 745 woods, totalling more than 25,000 acres. The plan is now to encourage local communities to plant woods on land bought with local funds, backed by grants from the Millennium Commission and administered by The Woodland Trust.'

At Deddington the community has been set a target of £9,000 by the Trust. The remainder of the £28,000 needed to buy and plant the land will come from the Trust and a £12,500 grant from Cherwell District Council, which is dependent on the village raising the £9,000. To date the 600 householders in the community have raised about half the required amount, mainly by gift pledges from £10 to £25.

26 Herby Avenue in Wexhamshire, which is competing with Deddington to have the first of the 200 new woods, progress has been slower. Since the initial target of £43,000 to create 17.5 acres of woodland on land just to the north of the village proved too high, the plan now is to purchase eight acres of the land and put the £5,500 pledged so far towards the new target figure of £16,000.

Other likely sites for the new woods include 20 acres on the site of a former coal mine in Derbyshire, two parcels of land in Suffolk and two gifts of land, one in Essex and one in Cumbria.

'All these sites have to be examined by our staff to assess the potential,' said Ms Fletcher. 'What is essential is that the land and the wood planted there is emphatically broad-leaved trees native to the area. We also try to create a range of habitats where wildlife can flourish. We encourage local people to design features such as ponds, wildflower meadows in clearings and perhaps a commemorative stone, or a wooden sculpture, to mark the wood's establishment.'

The Trust also wants to make people aware of the need for suitable sites and for communities to own and sustain a wood that will be both a natural and a social treasure to maintain 'with the rest of the Woodland Trust'.

More than 35 per cent of existing woods owned by the Trust are open to the public to walk and explore. The only ones that are not are those which are young beechwood plantations to ripen - to provide woods on the edge of a village.

Other reasons for keeping people away from a third of our 745 woods were health and safety and over the years we have been asked to provide land and care for veterans,' Ms Fletcher said. 'At the beginning of the Nineties we started planting small-scale community forests in Leicestershire, Shropshire and the second county - and the current project to plant 200 new woods arose from this.'

For more information ask the Trust's hotline on 01476 591691 and ask for a Woods on Your Doorstep pack. Prospective sites should ideally be between one and 20 acres and with easy walking distances of a town or village.

Clive Newson

WIP

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gravel Spain

In Madrid on Saturday afternoon the streets are deserted; ten hours later you can hardly move

By Claire Gervat



Above: Park life: Madrileños around the boating lake in the Retiro, the city's main park, photograph: Jeremy Green/Network; below Madrid Plaza's statue of Felipe II, photograph Robert Harding picture library

For more than 600 years after its foundation, Madrid was an undistinguished little town on a hot and dusty plateau. Then, in 1561, King Philip II decided to come on an extended visit, bringing with him the entire royal household. The visit never ended: Philip had never intended it to, for he'd already decided to make Madrid the new capital of Spain.

Four centuries later, on a warm spring day, it seems an entirely happy choice, but at the time it hardly made sense at all. Geographically Madrid is right in the middle of the Iberian peninsula, which might have seemed convenient, but it doesn't have a navigable river, which was a serious disadvantage in those days.

And there wasn't even a cathedral. But Philip wanted it anyway, perhaps just to show that the king could do just as he liked. In some respects, it was the Milton Keynes of its time, but built to demonstrate the power of the Hapsburgs rather than the supremacy of town planners.

When I lived in Madrid as a child it certainly seemed a huge city, with grand palaces and statues and parks, and fountains instead of roundabouts in which heroic figures were pulled by galloping horses through jets of water, and everything lit up at night. Returning recently as an adult I was relieved to discover that it looked as magnificent to my grown-up eyes. Ne-

ture still raises his trident in a mist of spray in the middle of Plaza Canovas de Castillo, not far from the Prado museum: the Spaniards have not lost their talent for floodlighting; and I was nearly run over a hundred times as I stopped half-way across streets to admire another sweep of avenue or calculated vista.

These grand streets and buildings made the perfect backdrop for a procession of Hapsburg rulers, and the people of Madrid squeezed themselves into the remaining spaces as best they could. Behind the main thoroughfares is a tangle of narrow streets, lined with four- or five-storey houses and small shops. Wandering through, you stumble into tiny squares almost taken up by a café terrace, and it's hard – and possibly pointless – to resist the temptation to stop at each one for a taste of something. I often remember places by what I ate or drank there. In the case of Madrid that meant the hideously sweet things I liked as a child: I was especially fond of a make of bread and cakes called, rather unfortunately, Bimbo.

Strolling from café to bar to park and so on is a Madrid speciality, so it was strange that at six o'clock on a Saturday afternoon the streets were almost deserted. Ten hours later you could hardly move for people, and the traffic was at a standstill. The Protestant ideal of early bedtimes never reached this far south, and many bars stay open until two or three, especially at the



weekend. Madrid is a wonderful place to be at night; you meander down narrow roads busy with groups of strolling Madrileños of all ages, searching for the bar with the best wine or the most famous tapas, perhaps after a trip to the cinema (late screenings start around 1am).

It's a wonderful place to be in the daytime as well. Despite the grandness of much of the architecture, the central area is quite compact, so it's perfectly feasible to walk nearly everywhere, especially as so many hotels are close to the "museum area" round the Prado. The Prado itself is one of Madrid's main attractions, not surprisingly, but it's impossible to take in every-

thing on one visit; luckily the rooms are arranged by artist, so you can see just the El Grecos and the Goyas, for instance. The same is true of the nearby Reina Sofia museum, a former hospital and now a showcase for modern art including Picasso's *Guernica*. From the glass-sided lifts added to the front of the building, there's a good view of one of Madrid's more unusual attractions. Atocha station, a late 19th-century iron and glass affair now restored to include an indoor tropical garden and several cafés (naturally). It's like a massive greenhouse, yet it's still a working station with a modern extension from where the trains actually run.

It's hard to think of a place I'd rather arrive.

From Atocha it's not far to the Retiro, a huge landscaped park with lakes, pavilions and a miniature Crystal Palace (currently being restored). During the week it is not busy, but on Sunday it feels as if the whole population of the city has converged for a walk. Along the path by the boating lake there are puppet shows, clowns and still-walkers, and hawkers selling anything from Indian cotton skirts to batteries: by the fountains at either end of the path people set up and play music.

During the week the Retiro is much less crowded, but if you absolutely have to have peace on a Sunday the best place is the Botanical Garden, next to the Prado, created in the 18th century. Strolling round its formal beds, you feel that the city is miles away. It's especially enjoyable in spring as a cure for the "winter will never end" thoughts that afflict northern Europeans; here, winter already has ended.

On the way back from the Retiro to my hotel, I bumped into a friend of a friend who was going to the Plaza Mayor, one of Madrid's best-known squares, so I went with her. We sat outside one of the many cafés, chatting, drinking and basking in the sun, watching the people ambling past and admiring the architecture. Which is what life in Madrid is all about. Perhaps Milton Keynes will be this civilised in around 400 years' time.

SURVIVAL GUIDE SPAIN

Taking Off

For years the only economical way to fly to Spain was on a charter. This summer, though, the sums have changed radically. The Spanish national airline, Iberia (0171-830 0011), has been flying to London for 50 years – and is celebrating with a series of strictly limited offers.

The first was available on 1 April only, for the foolish fare of £55 return to Madrid. Last Monday, Barcelona was on sale for a more realistic £114. You can expect more low fares; watch these pages or call Iberia for details. Meanwhile, other carriers are cutting fares; Air UK (0345 666777) has a Stansted-Madrid return for £104 on sale until 1 May. All these fares include Britain's £5 Air Passenger Duty: Spain did away with its 50 peseta charge years ago.

British Airways (0345 222111) is expanding its route network to southern Spain, with GB Airways operating services on BA's behalf from Gatwick to Valencia (£124 return), Jerez de la Frontera (starting 17 May, £144) and Murcia (£154). Weekend travel costs £20 more.

Expect fares to Barcelona to fall in June, when EasyJet (01582 445566) begins low-cost flights from Luton airport. From 12 June, it will charge £49 each way (plus £5 UK tax on the outbound leg), though fares can rise to £99 as the flights sell out.

For some destinations, the only prospect for a non-stop flight is to use a charter. We buy charter flights from a variety of companies, including Avro (01293 567916), The Flight Company (0181-977 9455) and Airtours (01706 260000).

Flights over the two May bank holiday weekends are extremely busy, especially to the south. Fares are consequently high and availability poor. To Malaga, British Airways's best fare travelling out 3 May, back 6 May is £488; Gibraltar is a cheaper alternative at £274.

Checking In

The *parador* (government-run hotel, usually in a historic property) remains the best travel bargain in Spain. The new one in Ronda has arguably the finest view of any hotel in Europe, though the panorama from the poolside in Aguablava on the Costa Brava is a close second. Keytel International (0171-402 8182) represents the chain in the UK.

International Chapters (0171-722 9560) offers a range of villas and fincas on the mainland and in the Balearics. A restored farmhouse in San Carlos, Ibiza, costs £4,200 for a week in late July or August, but sleeps 12.

The south east corner of Mallorca has the dual benefits of quiet countryside and good beaches. Accommodation in rural farmhouses around Santanyi is sold by Mallorcan Countryside Holidays (0181-747 1851). These sleep around a dozen people, and cost from £600 to £2,195 for a week according to season.

Getting Around

Rail remains the best way to combine comfort, speed and economy, though if you want to sacrifice the latter two for a good dose of the former then consider the Andalus Express, a pre-war train that trundles grandly through Andalusia. A five-night trip through Cox & Kings (0171-873 5000) costs £1,299, including flights from London.

Domestic flights are still mostly overpriced and lacking in frills, though the introduction of competition means Aviaco (Iberia's domestic arm) has sharpened up its act. Madrid-Barcelona costs £50 one-way. You can combine two centres with an Iberia "Bravo" fare; for £214 you could fly London-Madrid-Ibiza-London.

Car rental is becoming phenomenally competitive, with the best deals booked from Britain. For a week picking up from Barcelona airport in August, Holiday Autos (0990 300400) charges £139 fully inclusive and promises to undercut all comers by £5.

Checking Out

The range of activity holidays in Spain is expanding rapidly. For example, the Field Studies Council (01743 850164) is offering a fortnight in the Pyrenees in July studying flowers and butterflies (£1,200), or a week of birdwatching in Mallorca in September (£720).

To visit Spain's newest and largest national park, sign up with Explore Worldwide (01252 319448) for an eight-day trip through the Picos de Europa. You pay £395, including flights, accommodation and breakfast.

A short way south in the Empordà region, New Experience Holidays (01922 410909) has a two-centre walking holiday based on the medieval towns of Pals and Llafranc. A week in June costs £605.

A more leisurely survey of the sights and scenery may be had on an Archers Tours coach trip; a week in Andalusia in May costs £345 including flights.

Finding Out

The Spanish tourist office is at 57 St James's Street, London SW1A 1LD (0171-499 0901).

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A million Britons fly to Palma every year and head straight for the beach. This is what they are missing... By Tony Kelly

It is early evening in the Mediterranean, the time when the warm sun and cool breeze each struggle to gain the upper hand. Look one way and you gaze into an endless sea; look the other to see a Gothic cathedral rising above the palm trees, its mellow sandstone turned to gold by the last of the sun. This is the scene as you stand on the seafront in Palma de Mallorca.

Go to any airport this summer and you will find flight after flight heading for Palma. A million Britons fly there every year and most make straight for the beaches, which begin just minutes from the airport. The 15-mile stretch of the Bay of Palma has more tourist beds than the whole of Greece. Yet in the middle of all this is a sublime city that few tourists bother to visit — a smaller, sunnier version of Barcelona right down to its Catalan street names and its *rambla* lined with flower stalls. And thanks to the package holiday industry you can go there a lot more cheaply than to Barcelona.

The cathedral by the sea dominates all else. Begun in 1230 on the site of the city's Great Mosque, it served as a reminder to all who arrived by sea of the might of Mallorca's Christian conquerors. The building of it took almost 400 years and more touches were added this century by the Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí. His crown of thorns, suspended above the altar and fashioned from cardboard, cork, nails and brocade, needs to be seen illuminated. Join a large congregation for the Sunday morning Mass.

Next door is the royal palace whose Moorish arches, lit up at night like a row of lanterns, speak of Mallorca's Arab past. A thousand years ago, while other cities were in the Dark Ages, Palma (then known as Medina Mayurqa) had street lights, covered sewers and heated baths. The tiny Arab Baths are all that remain, and sitting in the courtyard, shaded by cactus, palm and orange trees, you can imagine yourself cooling off after a spell in the *hammam*.

It is easy to get lost around here in the

Getting there

Iberia (0171-830 0011) and British Midland (0345 554554) both have scheduled flights from Heathrow to Palma from £160 return in May. Thomson (0171-707 9000) and numerous other companies operate charters from all over Britain — the author paid £75 return from Stansted in February.

Where to stay

Hotel San Lorenzo, Carrer Sant Llorenç, 14 (00 34 71 728200); doubles around £85. Hotel Borne, Carrer Sant Jaume 3 (00 34 71 712942); doubles from around £47. Both are converted palaces in the old city.

Where to eat

S'Arosseria, Passeig Marítim 13 (737572); Celler Sa Premea, Plaça Bisbe Berenguer de Palou (723529); Caballito del Mar, opposite La Llotja (721074) for expensive seafood.

maze of narrow streets, each just wide enough to take a car. Enormous wooden doors hide patios of stone steps, balconied arcades and ancient wells. Palma's former palaces have been turned into apartments, while a few have become stylish hotels.

When you tire of history, head for the suburbs and the house and studio belonging to the painter Joan Miró. Miró spent most of his life in Barcelona, but his wife and mother were Mallorcan and he always longed to return to the scene of his childhood holidays. In his paintings he used bright splashes of primary colours in conscious imitation of Mallorcan peasant pottery. His studio has been left untouched since his death in 1983, with work on the easels and open tins of paint.

A generation of Mallorcan artists has grown up inspired by Miró, and Palma has become an important centre of modern art. Of several galleries, the most interesting is La Llotja, the 15th-century maritime

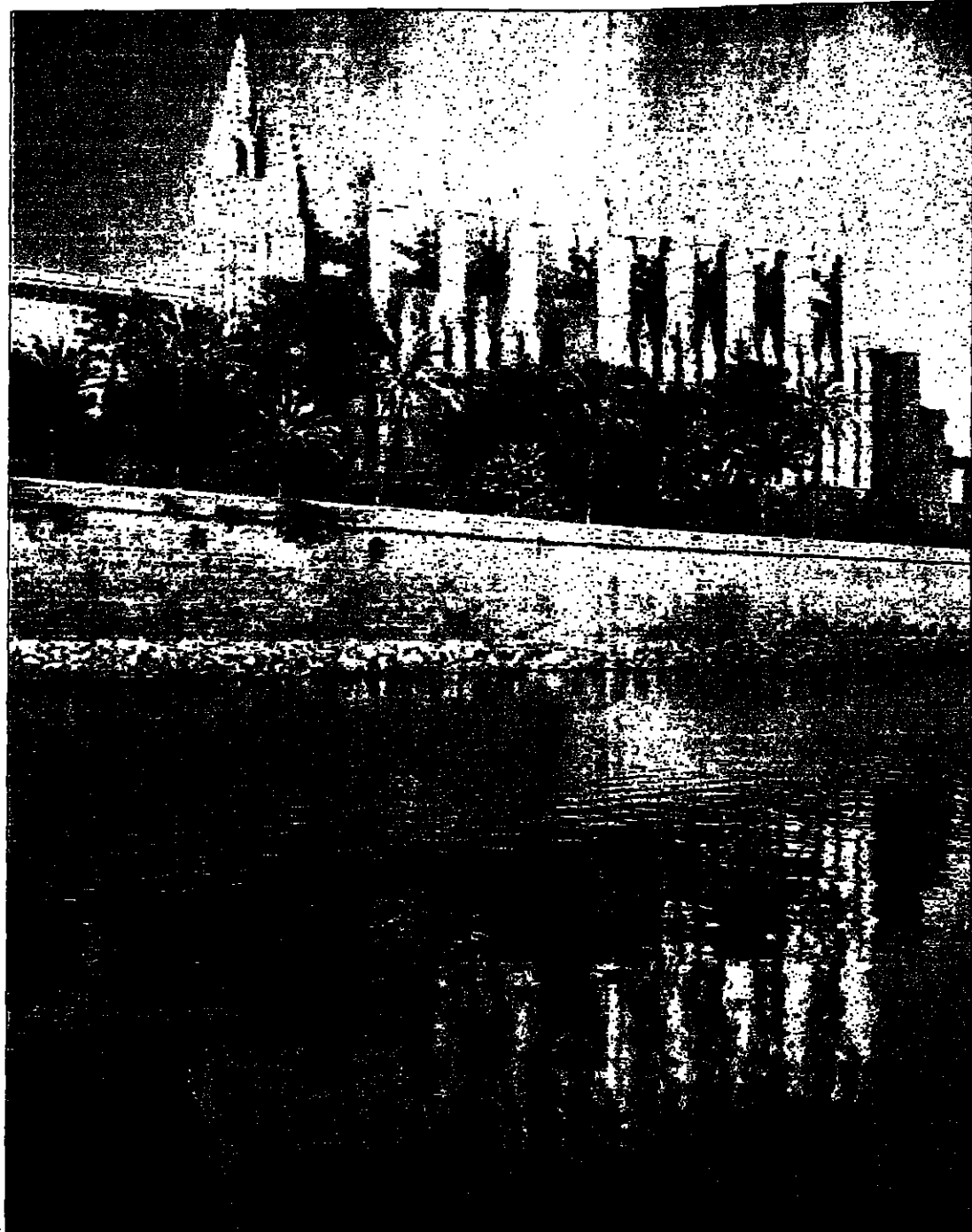
exchange on the seafront. Half-castle, half-church, with twin turrets and an angel over the door, it would be worth a visit just to see the finest rib-vaulting in Mallorca, but there are also changing exhibitions of contemporary art. This is the best value visit in Palma — it costs absolutely nothing.

Near here is the star of Passeig Marítim. A promenade and cycle path follow the harbour around to the Club de Mar, where you look back towards the cathedral through a forest of masts and fishing-nets. The walk is best done in the evening, the traditional time for a *paseo*; as dusk turns to darkness, the cathedral lights up and Passeig Marítim becomes the fashionable place to dine. At S'Arosseria the speciality is rice, cooked in a dozen styles from vegetarian "convent rice" to a full-blown lobster paella. Second helpings are the norm.

Celler Sa Premea, at the other end of town, is lined with massive oak vats and faded bullfighting posters. Wine comes out of a tap in the wall and the menu features Mallorcan classics like *frit*, a fry-up of offal, potatoes and tomatoes in olive oil. Go before 10pm and it will be packed out with tourists; go late if you want to see how the locals eat.

To find out what you're missing, take the bus one night to Palma Nova. This brash resort was once a mere village — someone who grew up there in the 1950s told me that he went back recently and only recognised one building. The menus are in English and feature local specialities like beans on toast; the bars serve John Smith's (lots of them) and do their bit for sobriety with offers like "a baseball cap with every two pints of sangria".

Take the last bus back to Palma and head instead for Abaco, a restored 17th-century palace turned into a pleasant bar near La Llotja. You sit on a sofa surrounded by antiques, sipping cocktails by candlelight to the sound of classical music and the scent of incense and fresh flowers. Palma Nova is less than ten miles, but it could be a world away. Order another drink and give thanks that you decided to stay in Palma.



A miniature Barcelona: Palma's cathedral reflected in the lake of Parque de Mar

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Off the beaten (dog)track

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a church courtyard. A tall, narrow stone tower with a crenellated top stands prominently on the right. Bare trees frame the scene, and a person is visible in the lower left foreground.

St Mary's church, Walthamstow, where William Morris was christened

Photo: Kalpesh Lathigra

Opposite is the old National School of 1819 that once accommodated 100 boys and 100 girls but is now occupied by the Spiritualist Church. Over to the left are the Squire's Almshouses, which were paid for by widow Squires and opened in 1795 for "Six Decayed Tradesmen's Widows of this Parish and no other".

Turn right down Hoe Street and walk through to the major traffic junction on Forest Road. In one corner is the famous Bell pub, rebuilt in 1900 to cater for Waltham-

But, after all, this was the lofty opinion of a man sufficiently endowed with private means to live in Kelmscott House overlooking the Thames at Hammersmith, and his country retreat of Kelmscott Manor in Gloucestershire. More than that, I feel certain that Morris himself, like many of his enthusiasts, had not bothered to walk around Walthamstow Village. Do so, and help put Walthamstow on the map.

William Morris Gallery, Lloyd Park, Forest Road, London E17 4PP (0181-527 3782). Open Tuesday-Saturday, and the first Sunday in each month, 10am to 1pm, 2-5pm. Admission free. Vestry House Museum, Vestry Road, London E17 9NH (0181-509 1917). Open Monday-Friday 10am to 1pm, 2-5.30pm; Saturday 10am-1pm, 2-5pm. Admission free.

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'It's ludicrous that people stay away'

Will the murder of tourists in Egypt do anything to deter British travellers? By Sue Wheat

Tourism collided fatally with terrorism once more on Thursday, when gunmen massacred 18 Greek pilgrims outside a hotel in Cairo. Long after the bodies of the victims have been flown back to their grieving families, Egypt will be paying the price of the slaughter. With every such tragedy, the frontiers of fear shift in our perceptions.

In the US a few years ago I invited some American friends to visit me in England. Their response was, "Maybe when it's less dangerous." It took a moment to realise they were talking about IRA bombs. "But I've never seen any trouble," I insisted. They were unconvinced; I was infuriated by their unwillingness to believe me.

Travelling in Egypt, I could hear a similar frustration in the comments of the locals I met. "It's ludicrous that people stay away," said one Egyptian woman on the journey from Sinai to Cairo. "Don't people realise these Islamic Fundamentalists are just a minority of people in Egypt, and the odds of being attacked are less than those of being run over by a bus in England?"

I could see her point. Around 15,000 people have died on British roads since 1992, compared with two Britons killed by terrorist attacks in Egypt. As we drove through some of the most stunning scenery across the desert, past Bedouin men on camels striding magnificently across the mountain plains, and through oases scattered with palm trees straight from a Hollywood film set, I couldn't imagine a more unlikely place to see a terrorist. "You must go home and tell people Egypt is not dangerous," her friend, an engineer from Cairo added, "and we want people to come."

In one very selfish way, I didn't want to do as they said – the sight of packed tourist coaches trundling through that idyllic desert route would certainly spoil my vision of Egypt.

And anyway, being thought of as a kind of touristic version of Kate Adie is also quite a novelty. "Aren't you brave?" people had said before I left. The truth is, the nearest I got to intrepid was when I started to climb the pyramids and decided it was too much like hard work. Travelling to a country that others are scared of going to is quite a thrilling experience, especially when you realise you're not being brave at all.

The Egyptians are very worried about the effect of terrorism on tourism. In our case, the authorities seemed to be so intent on making the tour group I was with feel protected that it was quite a challenge to persuade them that our minibus didn't need a police escort on the busy highway from Alexandria to Cairo. We did, however, give in on our journey to Siwa, a remote oasis in the north of Egypt. This was more because of wishing to indulge the 18-year-old rookie policeman they pushed on to our bus, excited at the prospect of being away from home for a few days, rather than fear. I don't think for a moment that we were ever in any danger, and I doubt if there was anything our baby-faced policeman without a gun could have done about it if we were – but he came anyway and seemed to enjoy practising his English and guiding us to the best sunset locations.

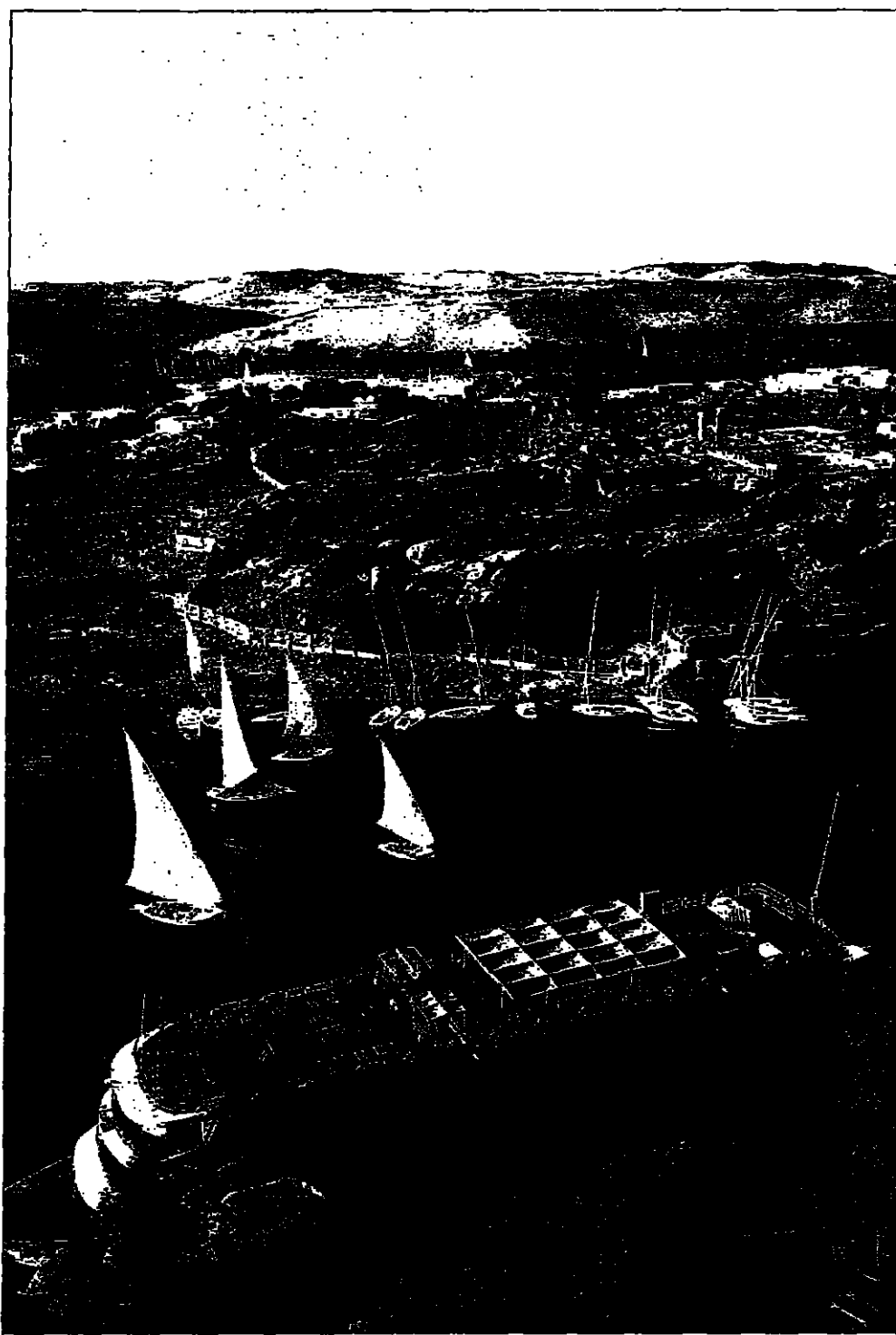
So given the chance, would I go back to Egypt next week? The answer is as clear-cut as the response to the following: do I want to snorkel in one of the best diving locations in the world; breathe the air in ancient Pharaonic tombs and marvel at the perfectly intact hieroglyphics; visit some more of the 96 pyramids around the country; learn about the ancient Bedouin culture and journey into the dramatic Sinai mountains? To each, an emphatic "yes".

And do I think I would be in danger? On a rational basis, no. You should worry more about

crossing the road in Cairo than becoming a victim of terrorism. Master what I termed "the Egyptian miracle walk" – a nonchalant stroll across at least five lanes of chaotic traffic without looking worried or angry or speeding up – and you deserve immediate Egyptian residency.

But the trend of targeting tourists is not one that should be taken lightly. As an Egyptian friend explains, "The focus of attacks on the tourism industry is linked to the fact that fundamentalists are generally poor, young, and unemployed. The fundamentalist movement isn't really religious, but feeds upon their lack of power and their frustrations, through their poverty." And as with tourism development in many Third World countries, tourism in Egypt accentuates the gap between the rich and the poor, especially when tourism facilities are luxurious and foreign-owned. By visiting very poor areas in luxury buses and staying at big hotels, which are often in poor areas, tourists are just rubbing salt into wounds. So what can tourists do? Go to Egypt, enjoy the culture, the landscape and the people, and travel in a way that puts as much money into local hands as possible. If the fear of attack leads to the increased ghettoisation of tourists into protected areas, and the increased physical and economic marginalisation of the people, it would certainly be the worst thing for us all.

Foreign Office travel advice for Egypt: "Extremists have conducted a campaign of violence against the Egyptian government since 1992 and have warned tourists not to visit. The authorities attach the highest priority to protecting visitors. But as the latest attack shows, security cannot be guaranteed and tourists appear, in this incident, to be the deliberate target. Visitors are advised not to travel by road, rail or river to the Governorate of Minya, unless they have specific business there".



Tourist boats and feluccas on the Nile

Photograph: Thierry Borredon/TSW



SIMON CALDER

Yum. Eat a Bounty bar, book a holiday and earn £50 in the foreign currency of your choice. This is the offer that Mars and Airtours have put together. Unlike all the other discount deals floating around, no strings appears to be attached. You buy your Bounty, send in the wrapper, go to Going Places (Airtours' own travel agent) and book. No mandatory insurance, no minimum spend.

This offer runs for bookings made until the end of the year. So try this trick: wait until next summer's holidays are launched (which could be as early as July this year) and use the voucher for one of the loss leaders that the tour operators roll out in order to put "Holidays from £99" on the front of the brochure. With a bit of luck, a trip for £49 could be in the offing. The last deal I saw as good as this was offering free flights to America courtesy of Hoover.

One last tip: the outside of the wrappers says "send in two proofs of purchase", but inside only one is mentioned. The company says people sending in one will qualify.

This honteous offer is more generous than the one promoted by the makers of Aero (it's tough work, you know, researching all these chocolate stories). If you take up their invitation to "float away to paradise", you could find yourself spending £108 to save £100.

Munch your way through four Aero bars, and you can save £100 on a holiday – but only if you choose one costing more than £700. If this is for two people travelling together, you must each buy insurance, costing £54 for a fortnight. By comparison, the Independent's annual travel policy (available on 0800 551881) costs £78.50 for a whole year.

Tourists are more sophisticated than the travel industry assumes. We caught up a long time ago with the tired old trick of using overpriced insurance to fund discount offers. The cumulative effect is to make us deeply suspicious of any promotions offered by travel agents and tour operators, and to realise that Aero bars can end up costing considerably more than 27 pence.

Terror and tourism

The fax landed on my desk just as news was arriving about the latest terrorist attack on tourists in Cairo. It invited me on a freebie to the self-styled Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. "Because of the long-running political feud between the two sectors, the North has remained virtually unspoiled." Spin doctors in the travel industry are never short of finding silver linings among the clouds of international politics.

The more tourism spreads its tentacles into hitherto "undiscovered" parts, the more it runs into conflict with geo-politics and terrorism. The reason that large numbers of travellers are only now starting to discover the broad and blissful Pacific beaches of El Salvador and Nicaragua is that these Central American republics spent most of the Eighties in varying degrees of civil turmoil. Travellers seeking the new and different are attracted to former war zones for the

simple reason that it takes time for images of violence to subside – so there is a lag between the end of a conflict and the commencement of mass tourism.

For the last couple of years, the travel industry has talked excitedly about the re-emergence of Beirut as a destination. The extreme violence rained upon Lebanon this week will set back the tourism clock and affect its many sub-industries. A new guidebook, *The Traveller's Survival Kit: Lebanon*, is being rapidly rewritten before its publication in mid-May and the line "now that peace has been restored" has been removed from the back cover.

Although many terrorist groups have now latched on to the political value of targeting tourists, the number of British casualties of terrorism is tiny compared with the overall risks of travel; a car crash in France or malaria contracted in Kenya is much more likely to kill you than a politically motivated attack. But, as

Britain's inbound tour operators are finding, image is crucial. Bomb attacks on London landmarks and double-decker buses are bound to deter some visitors.

It is a grisly truth of travel that one after-effect of violence is holidays at giveaway prices. A press release has just arrived from leading long-haul operator Kuoni. From this week until the end of June, you can fly BA from London to Colombo and have a week in a three-star hotel for £399, nearly £200 less than the lowest BA fare for the flight alone. Bomb attacks by Tamil separatists have dented the long-haul travel industry's hopes for Sri Lanka. As this latest offer shows, the tourist who follows the tragic course of terrorism around the world can cash in.

Foreign Office Travel Advice: call 0171-238 4503 or 4504, or consult BBC-2 Ceefax from page 564 onwards. The Internet address is <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

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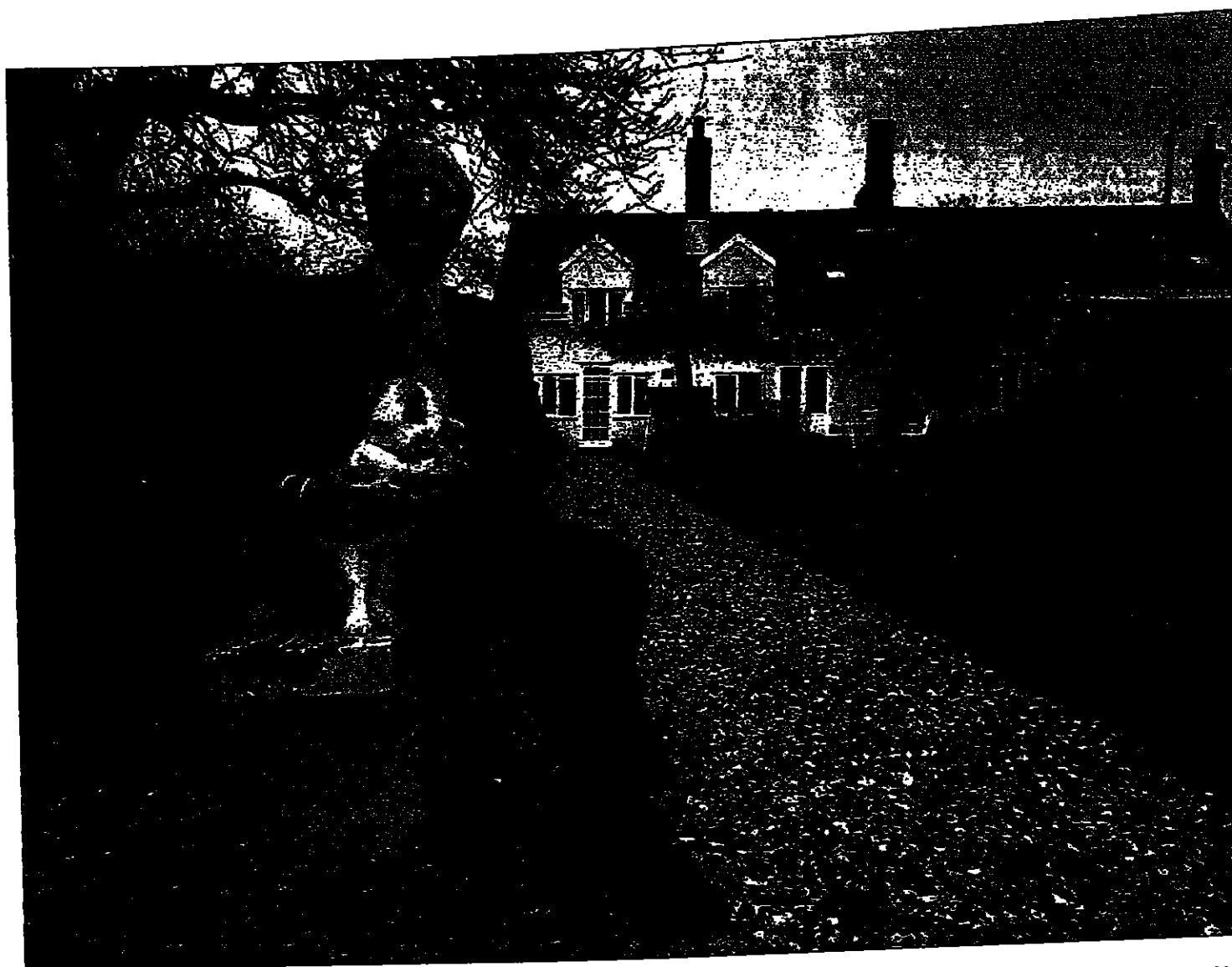
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The gamble for MPs in search of a new seat

Some 78 MPs are intending to stand down at the next election. Already, their houses are appearing on the market. By Rosalind Russell



Sir John Hannam, MP for Exeter, with Tiger in front of the Grade II listed farmhouse he is selling.

Photograph: Tim Cuff/Apex

The minister who so famously announced, "Je ne regrette rien," may live to regret his acceptance by Harrogate: property prices there are much higher than in Shropshire. Presently representing Kingston-upon-Thames, Norman Lamont will be fighting Harrogate, which is to be vacated by hunt supporter Robert Banks (who owns a flat in the London Docklands).

The former Chancellor sent his CV to a dozen constituencies, including North Shropshire, Stratford-on-Avon, Kensington and Chelsea, Epping Forest and South Cambridgeshire. A five-bedroom stone-built house with entertaining rooms befitting a man of his stature, five miles from Harrogate, will cost £345,000, says the agents Cluttons. Had he been accepted in Dudley Fishburn's seat in Kensington, on the other hand, he wouldn't have had to move at all.

Sir Jerry Wiggin, the pro-hanging Conserv-

ative MP for Weston-Super-Mare who was memorably mentioned in Alan Clark's Diaries for admitting to "blubbing and pleading" when sacked from Government by Margaret Thatcher, loudly refused to comment on whether he'll be moving house.

Successor to the Rt Hon Paul Channon - standing down in Southend West after 37 years - will be David Amess, whose majority in Basildon is a slim 1,480. But will Basildon forgive him for defecting, especially since as recently as 1992 Amess invited John Major to visit "Basildon - the finest and most exciting town in the country". He even instigated the I Love Basildon campaign. But with Southend practically next door, at least he shouldn't have to move house.

Some never move into their constituencies. Greville Janner, Labour MP for Leicester West for 26 years (his father held the seat for 25 before that) has never lived there. "It's only an

hour and a half's drive from my home in North London," he says.

Sir John Hannam stands down as Member for Exeter at the next General Election, after 26 years, to the regret of MPs on both sides. He moved into Orchard House, a Grade II listed four-bedroom house at Plymtree, Devon, at the beginning of the 1983 General Election. Unusually, he does not mind talking about his impending house move.

"It was wet and cold and conditions in the house were very primitive. I'd literally moved in with a couple of election helpers," says Sir John, a doughty, if gentlemanly, campaigner for the disabled.

Now restored and extended, it has a drawing room, sitting room, dining room and large study with French doors leading to the half-acre garden. And ancient mounting block stands by the front gates; roses, clematis and jasmine growing over the front of the house, wisteria

on the west side. The lawns have a tily pond, a lilac tree, magnolia, flowering cherries, weeping willow, apple and pear trees. Strutt & Parker in Exeter is inviting offers around £200,000.

"It has low beams and an inglenook, a lot of character, and views over open farmland. We moved from a bigger Georgian house across the valley. I'd lived in the area since I was elected in 1971," Sir John says. "A lot of MPs start off with the aim of keeping a main residence in the constituency and a pied à terre in London. It took me 10 years to realise it should be the other way round. One spends most of one's time in London because of the working hours - I certainly shan't miss the 10 o'clock vote! There is a lot of driving as an MP. I once worked out I had spent three years of my life behind the wheel of a car." So the Georgian house was sold, the smaller farmhouse bought, and the main home made in London, in a Vic-

torian house in Clapham. "I have a son studying music at Trinity College and he lives in the soundproof penthouse flat, as he plays seven hours a day! I have two daughters, a stepson and three stepdaughters - one of whom has five children. So we have a family network in London and will stay here for the next few years at least."

Sir John and Lady Vanessa intend to rent a home in the constituency for the remainder of the term of Government. His seat will be fought by a local doctor: Labour has to choose a new candidate, having de-selected John Lloyd because of his alleged involvement in pre-integration South African terrorism.

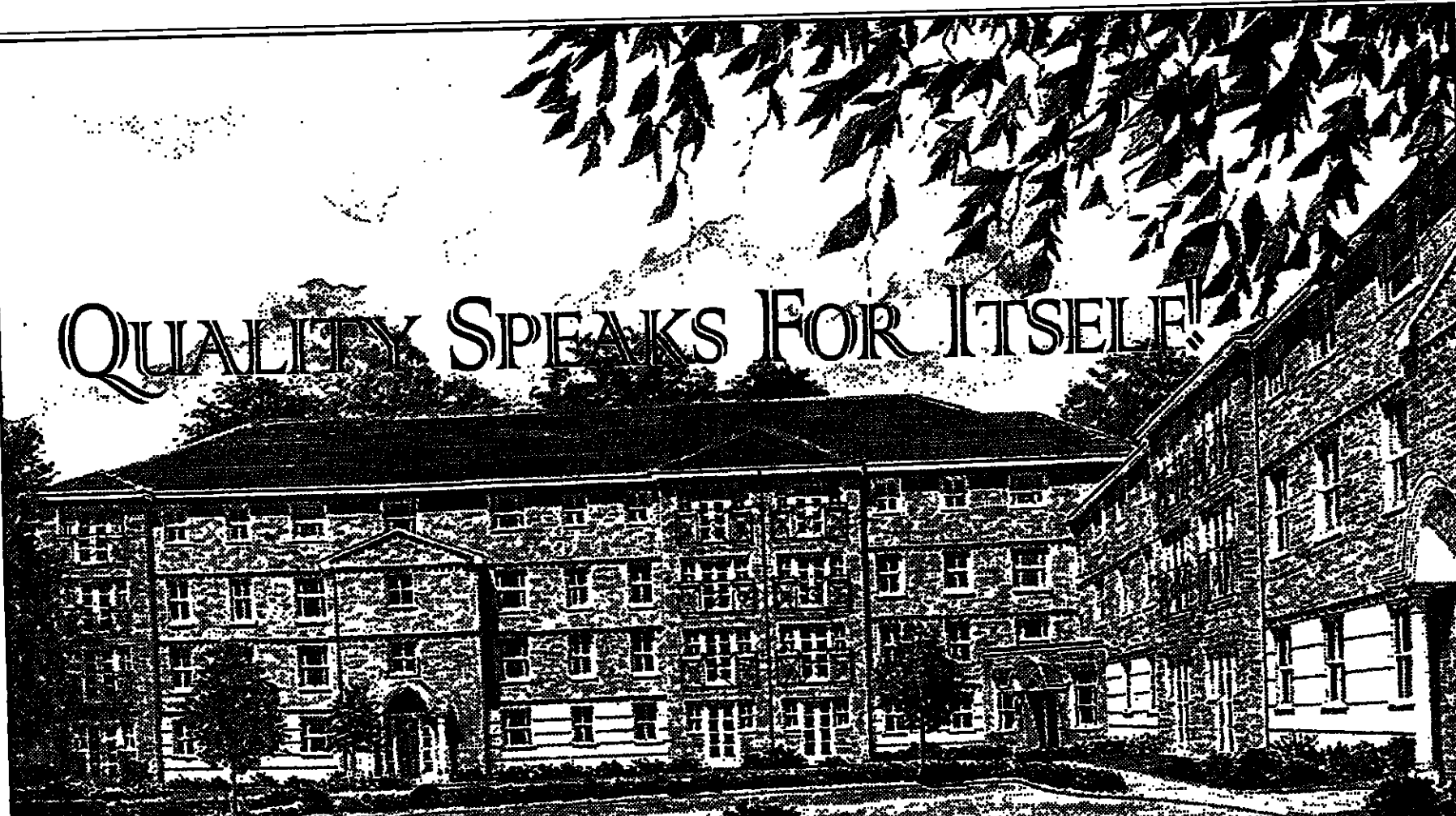
"I will miss Orchard House, especially as I have worked so hard on the garden," Sir John says. "Gardening is a respite from London political life. I have created a natural spring garden, with lots of blossom and flowers and shrubs. I will miss that very much."

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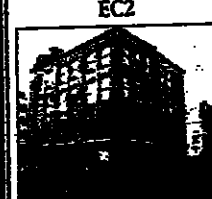
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Room for the kids, the dog and the kitchen sink

Just as the statisticians tell us that families are getting smaller, so the car makers begin to offer vehicles with more seats. To prove what an odd thing the car market is, these new seven-seaters (and even eight-seaters) are proving increasingly popular.

More extraordinary is that it took manufacturers so long to offer cars with more than five seats. The turning point was the invention of the MPV (multi-purpose vehicle), or "people carrier". Chrysler gave it to the Americans in 1983 just before Renault gave it to Europe (with the Espace) a year later. These minivan-like vehicles eschew the conventional and wasteful "three-box" format of normal saloons (one section for passengers, one for the engine, and one for the luggage) and offer "one box" styling that devotes all of the body to passengers. The new Ford Galaxy MPV is a seven-seater, while the same-size Mondeo can accommodate only five.

Not to be outdone, makers of estates and big 4x4s are increasingly offering seven-seater options, by stealing some of the boot space for passengers. So if you have a big family and need more than five seats, you've never had so much choice.

Space/versatility

The key to any seven-seater, and an area where the new MPVs dominate. All new MPVs, as well as the old favourite, the Espace, have rear and central seats that are comfortable for adults. The seats can also be taken out, so the vehicle can perform the alternate roles of people carrier and removal van. Their extra height over estate cars is a carrying boon.

The Peugeot 806/Fiat Ulysse/Citroën Synergie (same car, different badges) can be had in roomy eight-seater guise, although the Ford Galaxy/VW Sharan (again, same car different badges) comes with either six or seven seats, but has a longer cabin. Least roomy for the sixth and seventh passengers are the estates: their rear-facing bench seats are for children (under about 12) only.

The Land Rover Discovery's sixth and seventh seats are side facing. As with the rear-facing seats in an estate, they're often popular with children who seem to appreciate the better visibility such a set-up offers. The bigger Mitsubishi Shogun and Toyota Landcruiser, whose extra seats are forward facing, are significantly roomier than the Discovery.

Early MPVs had poor boot space when all seats were filled. Newer ones, such as the 806, are much better, although you'll have to stack the luggage on top of itself.

When estates and 4x4s have passengers in the boot area, there is hardly any space for bags.

Driver appeal

MPVs have made big strides recently. The Galaxy and Sharan drive almost as well as a good saloon, and are well ahead of the Peugeot/Citroën/Fiat and the ageing Espace, let alone the Nissan Serena.

Like 4x4s, MPVs have high driving positions, which give a commanding view of the road. The flipside is the high centre of gravity and, occasionally, the alarming body roll. The seven-seater Land Rover Discovery (Britain's best selling 4x4) is particularly roly-poly; the seven-seater Mitsubishi Shogun is better on road, if less accomplished off it.

No MPV or 4x4 can beat a good estate on the tarmac. The best seven-seater estate is the marvellous Mercedes E-class, which has just gone out of production, although it is still on sale in the UK. The new E-class estate is due here in the autumn. Just as good on the road, if not quite as substantial or as beautifully wrought, is the much-cheaper Renault Laguna seven-seater estate. Also impressive is the excellent Volvo 850 estate. The big, old-fashioned Volvo estates are nowhere near as good to drive, but they do feel safer and more stable than most MPVs or 4x4s.

Performance/fuel economy

Estates such as the Laguna start with an advantage: they're usually lighter than 4x4s or MPVs, aiding both acceleration and mpg. That said, the brisker seven-seater of all is the V6-engined Galaxy and Sharan, which feels almost like a sports car in a straight line. The thirstiest is the V8-engined Land Rover Discovery, which is wickedly profligate with the unleaded.

Most four-cylinder petrol versions of estates offer decent verve; the same is true of most MPVs. 4x4s are more slothful, thanks to all that heavy off-roading hardware under the floor, which is redundant unless the road turns to thick mud or snow.

Safety

Less clear cut than the other categories; it varies enormously between individual models. As a general rule, estates are the safest, especially the Mercedes and Volvos. They are more stable in tricky corners and most safety tests also suggest that they protect better in accidents.

MPVs and 4x4s, despite their bulk, tend not to do so well. MPVs usually site their front passenger and driver nearer the nose of the car (so in a head-on accident, there

is less space for absorbing the shock); the lack of a boot also affects the rear crumple zone space.

4x4s have bulk on their side, but recent safety tests in Australia suggest that vehicles such as the Discovery are less protective in a crash than large saloons or estates. Many 4x4s still fail to offer driver or passenger airbags as standard.

Nonetheless the bench seats typically offered in the rear of estates, for children, are vulnerable to severe tail end accidents; they also provide poor lateral support in the event of a side intrusion. The forward-facing conventional seats in an MPV tend to secure occupants better.

Costs

Seven-seaters – be they estate, MPV or 4x4 – hold their values better than conventional saloons or hatchbacks. The lowest depreciator here is the Mercedes estate, especially in its cheaper four-cylinder guises. The Renault Espace and Land Rover Discovery also have good reputations for depreciation – potentially the biggest cost in car ownership. Newer cars like the Galaxy and Sharan also hold their values well.

The Laguna is the cheapest car here to insure. 4x4s tend to be more expensive to cover than MPVs or estates.

Conclusions

Unless you regularly journey up snowy passes or cross country, forget about 4x4s. They're too expensive to buy and run, too cumbersome and too noisy. On the road, MPVs and estates are much better to drive and more comfortable. If you need four-wheel drive and wish to carry more than five people, the best options are the giants of the field: the Mitsubishi Shogun or the Toyota Landcruiser.

If you regularly carry more than five adults, need to haul seven people and lots of luggage, or frequently have to lug bulky or high loads, the MPV is the clever choice. An estate car just can't match its versatility. The best bet is either the Ford Galaxy or the Volkswagen Sharan: they serve up both carrying capacity and driving enjoyment. If you can afford it, go for the sublime V6 version.

If the sixth and seventh seats will only ever be used by children, then stick to an estate car. They are, unsurprisingly, the most car-like to drive, and therefore the most reassuring and familiar. The best value model is the excellent new Renault Laguna. But, if you can afford it, choose the Mercedes. A second-hand E-class estate, although still pricey, invariably makes a fine long-term buy.

Looking for a seven-seater vehicle? Gavin Green spot-checks the different models and pits MPVs against 4x4s and estates



Top the Fiat Ulysse; above the inside of the Renault Espace

Five years on, what a Triumph

Supremely smooth, big and stable: Roland Brown rides the Trophy 900cc

It's exactly five years since the Triumph motorcycle firm was reborn, putting the British industry back on the map in a manner that not even the most optimistic enthusiast had thought possible. Since then the progress of the company, owned by building millionaire John Bloor, has been relentless. Production has risen from fewer than 2,000 bikes in 1991 to last year's figure of more than 12,000, with a further increase due even before a large new factory, next to the current site at Hinckley in Leicestershire, opens in a year or two's time.

Triumph's first bike back in 1991 was a sports tourer called the Trophy, and it's a sign of the firm's policy of steady development that this year's most significant new machines have the same name. One criticism of early Triumphs was that the different models, all built using an innovative modular concept by which many components were shared to reduce costs, were too similar. Triumph is nothing if not receptive to criticism, and has since introduced modifications to make each machine more specialised.

In the case of the Trophy, available in 900cc three-cylinder and 1200cc four-cylinder form, this has meant moving further towards the touring side of the spectrum, with added comfort, weather-protection and luggage-carrying ability. The latest 900cc model's water-cooled, twin-cam engine is unchanged, putting out a maximum of 94bhp through its six-speed gearbox. So, too, are many other components, including the frame, which is based around a large-diameter steel spine beneath the petrol tank.

Many other parts are new and designed for touring, most noticeably the Trophy's large plastic fairing with its distinctive pair of chrome-rimmed headlamps. The swept-back windscreen is broader than before; the fairing contains a couple of lockable glove compartments; a fuel gauge and clock are included in the instruments; and the Triumph has a pair of large, colour-matched luggage panniers, each capable of swallowing a full-face helmet. All of these are useful features for the long-distance rider.

The added weather protection certainly makes the Trophy better suited to chilly British weather, as I discovered on a trip

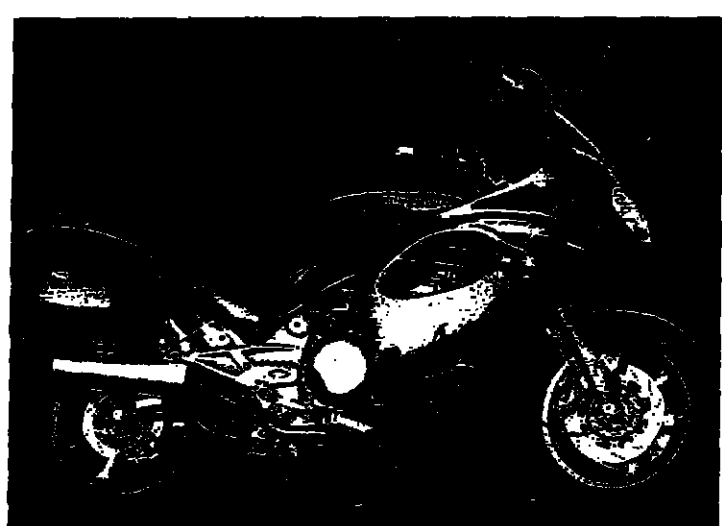


Photo: Roland Brown

from the Midlands to London via Wales. Heated handlebar grips will be available as an option in time for next winter, and I was wishing the 900 had them fitted as I headed down the M5 on a bitterly cold day. At speed, the big fairing kept off most of the wind, but turbulence from the screen created a roar that rapidly became tiring. Some rival tourers have a height-adjustable screen, a feature the Trophy could usefully incorporate.

Triumph's supremely smooth three-cylinder engine is well-suited to a touring bike, and helped the miles slip past almost unnoticed. This Trophy has a top speed of about 140mph, but the most impressive aspect of its performance is the strong delivery at low and medium revs. The Trophy always had instant acceleration on tap, from 2,000rpm to the 9,500rpm redline. Only the three-cylinder engine's thirst failed to impress. The Trophy's 25-litre fuel tank is generous, but brisk riding brought consumption tumbling to below 40mpg.

For a big machine the Trophy handled very well, remaining stable at speed in all but the fiercest crosswinds. At 220kph, it's reasonably light by touring-bike standards, and was agile enough to be enjoyable when the motorway ended and I began exploring the narrower, twistier roads of south Wales. The front forks are fairly soft, and tended to dive when the

twin front-disc brakes were used hard, but suspension at both ends generally worked well. And the compliant ride, in conjunction with a reshaped dual-seat and revised, slightly raised handlebars, allowed several hours' riding in comfort.

On a long trip a motorcyclist has plenty of time to notice the smallest detail, and the Trophy gets better the more closely it is examined. Its distinctive twin headlamps are bright, the mirrors remain clear, the paint finish – complete with discreet Union Jack logos – is rich. The dual-seat incorporates retractable hooks to hold luggage, plus solid grab-handles for a pillion. Despite their size, the colour-matched panniers are neatly styled and also narrower than the handlebars, a bonus when filtering through traffic.

Competition in the touring bike market has never been fiercer, with Honda's highly competent ST1100 four having recently been joined by BMW's new R1100RT boxer twin, but at £8,889 the Triumph more than holds its own. This reshaped Trophy is a sophisticated and well-equipped touring machine, and it retains the performance and handling ability that made the original model such fun to ride. Triumph has come a long way in the past five years. The Trophy 900 provides further proof that the British motorcycle industry is thriving once again.

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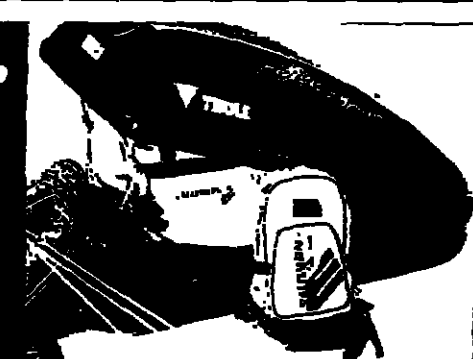
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Keynes anticipated
with uncanny accuracy
the findings of modern
research, which has
repeatedly shown that
trying to guess the
movements in a
market's overall level is
a losing investment
strategy

One of the fascinating things about the stock market is that, while circumstances change from generation to generation, the underlying issues remain much the same. Sixty years ago, both the UK economy and the stock market itself were virtually unrecognisable from their modern counterparts. Both were much more cyclical than now. The market itself was riddled with insider dealing. Inflation was minimal.

Yet investors then spent a good deal of the time arguing over just the same issues as they do now. Are shares a better bet than bonds? Should you trade shares actively or buy and hold them for a long time? Can anyone successfully forecast the market? Should you buy companies that are growing fast or ones whose shares look cheap by historic standards?

Everyone in the 1930s had their views, then as now, on all these questions – and none more so than Lord Keynes, the man whose brilliant mind did more to change the face of economics than anyone else this century.

This week marks the 50th anniversary of Keynes' death, and this year the 60th anniversary of his most famous publication, *The General Theory*.

While most people are aware of the decisive impact that Keynes' ideas had on the way governments attempt to manage their economies, fewer know much about his life as an investor. Yet as his biographer Lord Skidelsky has pointed out, few economists have ever been so actively involved in playing the markets as

Keynes – and none, arguably, has ever understood them better.

Throughout the 1920s, Keynes was an active trader in the currency and stock markets. For several years, with his stockbroking partner, Oswald Falk, he managed a pool of money for their friends and acquaintances.

He also single-handedly managed the finances of King's, his Cambridge college, with conspicuous success, multiplying their capital sevenfold in a matter of just a few years. All this while he was simultaneously pursuing his main career as a professional economist and taking a leading part in the political debates of the day.

The irony is that, while his reputation as an economist has suffered in recent years, his standing amongst investors has remained much more secure. Keynes had nearly all the qualities that good investors need, including the vital one of being able to change his mind overnight. According to Lord Skidelsky, Keynes' prowess at investing was such that by 1936 his personal net

worth was of the order of £500,000 – equivalent to some £13m in today's money.

And this despite having been nearly wiped out in the wake of the Wall Street crash just seven years earlier. Interestingly, the Wall Street debacle was not the first time that Keynes had confronted disaster.

In 1920, his feverish speculation on the currency markets all but wiped out the capital that he and Falk had raised from their family and friends.

But Keynes was notoriously not short of confidence and he returned to the fray with undiminished vigour. But he entirely changed his strategy. In his early career as an investor, his aim was to try and make money by anticipating short-term movements in the markets, based on his analysis of what was happening to interest rates and the money supply.

Yet even Keynes was forced to the reluctant conclusion that this particular game was simply too difficult to make work. "I was the principal investor of credit-cycle investment," he told a fellow economist in 1938, "and I have not seen a single case of a success having been made of it."

Keynes therefore anticipated with uncanny accuracy the findings of modern research, which has repeatedly shown that trying to time the market (that is, guessing the movements in the market's overall level) is a losing investment strategy.

In the 1930s, while continuing to speculate in the commodities market, he now preferred to stick to buying a relatively small number of shares that he liked – and then holding them for longer periods of time. These favoured stocks he dubbed his 'pets'.

The key to successful investment, he came to believe, was to look for bargains and resist the blandishments of "the crowd" who determine the short-term ups and downs of the markets.

Falling markets were the time to be looking to buy, not to sell. An investor, he told one correspondent, "should be aiming primarily at long period results".

It was good advice then, and it is good advice now. Yet Keynes was never one to lose sight of the fact that one reason so many people are drawn to the stock market is that they like to play what he called "the great game" of investment. Pitting your wits against the crowd may not be the best way to make money long term, but it can still be a lot of fun.

Not for nothing was Keynes one of the first to draw an analogy between the stock market and a casino. "The game of professional investment", he wrote, "is intolerably boring and over-exacting to anyone who is entirely exempt from the gambling instinct".

Keynes was also wise enough to know that stock markets are made up of people, not bits of paper, and that nothing will ever change human nature. Keynes may not have solved the problem of unemployment for all time, as many post-war politicians dared to believe, but he was the first great economist to write "the love of money" into his model of the economy.

He was also one of the first to realise that speculators, love them or loathe them, were a fact of life. He knew – for the simple reason that he was one himself.



JONATHAN DAVIS
INVESTMENTS

Time to think about a change of credit card

Are you still paying sky-high interest rates as well as an annual fee? You probably don't need to. By Clifford German

Anyone who has a credit card, has ever had a credit card, or has any thought of getting a card in the foreseeable future should set some time aside in the next few days and weeks to review their situation. Competition is at long last bringing interest rates down, and not a moment too soon for millions of cardholders whose enjoyment of their plastic cards has been tempered by the high-handed and arbitrary way in which most card companies have decided their interest rates.

We simply could not live without them. But the interest rates charged are always arbitrary, and not linked to any objective measure like base rates. Card companies are regularly

accused of being quick to put rates up and slow to bring them down.

Credit card companies suffer their fair share of fraud and bad debts. But they charge both the retailers and the card-users for their services and the current rates users pay on standard cards issued by the clearing banks are roughly 1.62 per cent a month on unpaid balances, which compounds up to 22 per cent a year, at a time when inflation is under 3 per cent.

Interest is charged on unpaid balances from the date the transaction was posted until the next account is drawn up, which means accidentally missing a payment date is a very costly exercise indeed, incurring

almost two months' interest on some items.

When so many users cottoned on to the extortionate costs of failing to pay bills on time and began doing so, the card companies responded by imposing annual charges to recoup some revenue. Standard charges are now £10-12 a year regardless of how often the card is used or whether the balances incur interest charges or not.

Barclaycard/Visa and Access/Mastercard no longer have a duopoly. Over the years a number of rivals, including Co-operative Bank, Bank of Scotland, Save & Prosper/Robert Fleming, American Express, Beneficial Bank, and the Halifax, Bradford & Bingley and Newcastle building societies, have entered the market offering lower interest rates on unpaid balances and/or no annual fees. Most of these use the clearing services of Visa and Mastercard, which also guarantees them wide acceptability on a par with the market leaders.

A large number of charities and special interests have also set up affinity cards which offer a full range of card services under the Visa or Mastercard banner and cream off a small proportion of the profits to good causes. Barclaycard hit back with Profile points and Natwest with Airmiles in an attempt to protect their market share and encourage cardholders to concentrate

card usage on their established cards.

Most card providers now offer a cheap introductory interest rate on balances transferred from another provider. Last year Co-operative Bank introduced a two-tier structure for its gold cards, offering a choice of a large fee and low interest for persistent borrowers and a no-fee card with higher interest for those who usually pay off in full.

Last month Royal Bank of Scotland teamed up with Advanta, one of the big wheels in credit cards in the US, to launch a card charging interest linked to base rates (and currently 15.6 per cent). A few days ago Petplan, the specialist provider of insurance for pets announced a fee-free card charging a competitive 18.9 per cent on unpaid balances. American Express responded by cutting its standard rate to 16.7 per cent for anyone who spends £1,000 a year and makes at least the minimum payment off their monthly balance. New recruits are offered an even sweeter 13.1 per cent rate until the end of 1996.

Next week People's Bank, another market leader in the US credit card business, is due to launch a new product in the UK and there are no prizes for guessing what it will be, or that it will undercut the market leaders even further.

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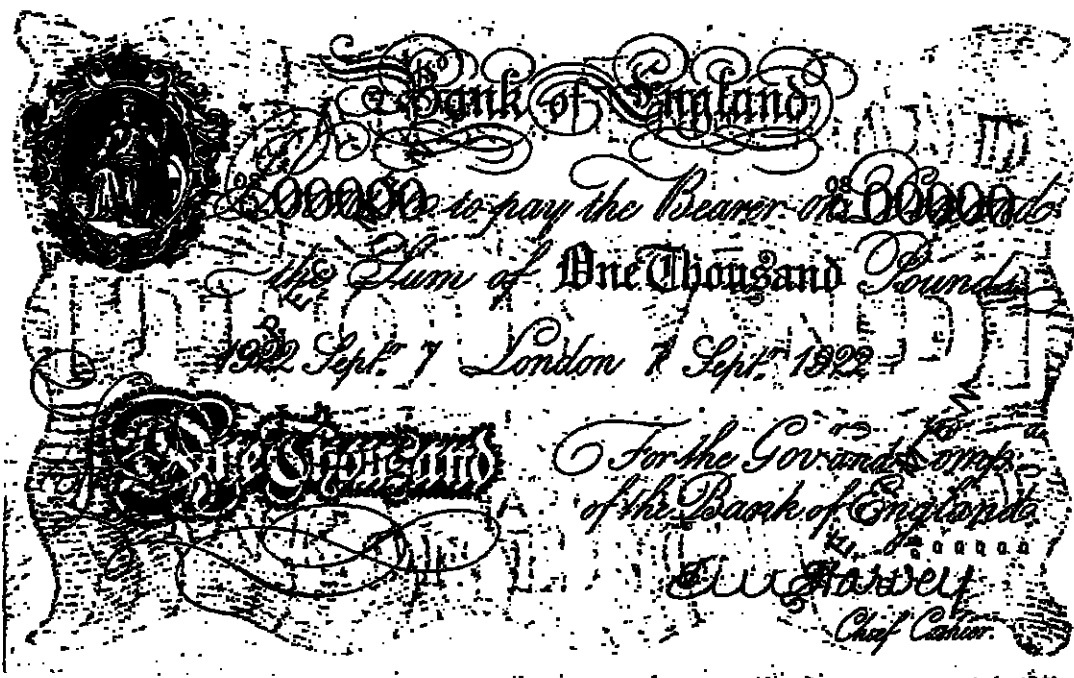
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How can a £1 note be worth over £50,000?

By John Andrew



Twenty years of inflation should have taught us that keeping old notes and coins is a mug's game. But really old money can be worth more than its equivalent in gold. A Bank of England £1 note sold at auction in 1993 for £57,200. Admittedly this was no ordinary example, for dated 2 March 1797 and bearing the serial number '2', it is the second note of the denomination ever issued by the Bank.

On April 24 Spink will be offering another Bank of England rarity at auction – a £1,000 note. It surprises many people to learn that the Bank issued £1,000 notes from the eighteenth century to the early 1940s.

Given that even in the 1930s, £1,000 would comfortably buy a couple of houses in Greater London, they were treated with care. According to the Bank's records, 63 examples apparently remain at large, although most of these would have perished in the bombing raids of the Second World War.

The example which will be offered by Spink on Wednesday (pictured above) is a specimen dated 7 September 1922. Specimen notes were issued by the Bank to other central banks to assist identification. Over the years, revolutions and a less meticulous attitude to currency in certain countries has resulted in some getting into private hands. However, large denomination specimens are of the highest rarity. Spink is anticipating its example will realise £20,000-£25,000.

A banknote is not "just money". It can take up to a year to engrave a single plate which is used to print just one side of a note. Just look at the intricate design of any currency note. There are watermarks, elaborate designs and an incredibly subtle use of colour. These are all techniques used to deter the forger. A banknote is where art and technology meet and the result is a miniature work of art.

Banknotes have certainly been

an expanding field of collectabilia in recent years. There are two quite distinct markets. Serious collectors are prepared to pay thousands of pounds for just a single note, while there are others who get just as much pleasure simply spending a few pence. It is possible to purchase a pack of 100 uncirculated world notes for £29.

Barnaby Faulk, who heads Spink's banknote department, believes the market is now buoyant because banknotes escaped the investment buying of the 1970s and 1980s. Certainly both the coin and stamp markets suffered from an influx of speculators who were buying solely for investment reasons.

They learnt to their cost that when sellers outnumber buyers, prices fall dramatically. Whereas many historic coins may be purchased today for the same prices at which they were selling in the mid-1970s, the market for banknotes has risen in recent years.

The price for Hong Kong banknotes bearing low serial numbers has risen the most dramatically. For example, a Government of Hong Kong \$1 which had been sold by a dealer in the late 1970s for £70 found a buyer at Sotheby's in 1993 for £28,600. The attraction of the piece was the serial number – A00001. However, Simon Narbeth of the specialist paper money dealers Colin Narbeth & Son, avoids all notes from the Far East on the basis that the market for the material is not collector-dominated.

There is a strong collectors' demand for English and Welsh provincial banknotes. From about 1780, over 900 different banks operating outside London have issued their own notes. Alphabetically from Ashby-de-la-Zouch to York, local paper money supplemented the nation's coinage to oil the wheels of commerce. Many of these banks failed, while the survivors merged to form the high street banks we know today.

From 1844, their note issuing was

strictly controlled and banks which merged were obliged to refrain from printing their own money. The last privately printed banknote was issued in 1920 by Fox, Fowler of Wellington, the year before it merged with Lloyds.

Visually, these provincial notes can be most appealing, with vignettes of rural scenes, allegorical figures, famous local buildings, or simply a shield of arms. They are an integral part of local history with the early ones being signed by the partners who owned the bank. Today, the notes generally sell for £100-£200 each, but rare items can change hands for over £1,000.

For those with an interest in historical events, a note issued during the French Revolution may appeal – a 1795 example can be secured for around £6. A note hand-signed by General Gordon during the siege of Khartoum is a little more expensive, but can be purchased from around £180, whereas a note issued during the siege of Mafeking under the authority of Baden Powell retails at around £50-£100.

Should banknote collecting appeal to you, whatever you buy, treat your acquisitions as an interest and not as an investment. Regard any increases in value as an added bonus rather than a goal in itself.

For a complimentary copy of Coin News, which incorporates Banknote News (cover price £2) and a free banknote, send 50p in stamps to cover postage, together with your name and address to: The Independent Readers' Offer, Token Publishing, PO Box 20, Axminster, Devon EX13 7YT

The Spink sale of Banknotes takes place on 24 April at 10am. For further details telephone 0171-930 7888. For a complimentary list of paper money for sale, contact: Colin Narbeth & Son, Tel: 0171-379 6975.

The end of building society windfalls

Speculators are now turning to insurance companies, says Clifford German

Investors in Bristol & West Building Society who had less than £100 in their accounts on April 15 are, uniquely, being given to the end of the year to top up their balances and qualify for a free dividend when the society is finally taken over by Bank of Ireland.

All members will get something. But those who opened their accounts after the beginning of last year, as well as nearly 200,000 borrower-members, are likely to get only £250 in preference shares and have to wait until next year to get it. For those who only joined the rush at the last minute and had to make a minimum investment of £2,500 to qualify, that is a much less successful spec-

ulation than any of the previous windfalls investors in earlier conversions and takeovers are expecting.

That partly reflects the fact that Bristol & West has been one of the less successful societies in recent years, paying for a succession of poor investment decisions including a very costly venture into estate agency. As a result Bank of Ireland paid significantly less per pound of assets and earnings than Abbey National paid for National & Provincial.

It also reflects the fact that most of the best prospects have now succumbed. A list of the societies still committed to mutual status now starts with the Nationwide and Bradford &

Bingley, which were in the top ten two years ago, and then moves to Britannia, Yorkshire and Birmingham Midlands, which were second division only a year ago.

These smaller fry are not big enough to convert alone into banks or to offer an instant solution to a financial institution trying to buy market share in a recovering UK mortgage market.

Meanwhile societies awaiting a new status and committed mutuals alike are stuffed with cash they did not really want and are in a good position to compete strongly in the mortgage market, although whether they will want to increase rates for investors is a moot point.

Committed speculators are switching to buying endowment policies issued by insurance companies considered most likely to convert into quoted companies or be taken over. Securitised Endowment Contracts, the London-based market-maker in traded endowment policies, says there is strong demand for policies issued by Scottish Amicable, Scottish Life, MGM Assurance and NPI among the mutual life offices, as well as listed life companies GRE and London & Manchester, while the promise of special bonuses is attracting buyers of policies issued by Friends Provident, Norwich Union, Prudential and Britannia.

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| Robert Fleming & P | 0800 829024 | MasterCard Visa | — | 1.00 | 14.00 |
| RSC Advance | 0800 077770 | Visa | — | 1.22 | 15.60 |
| Gold cards | | | | | |
| Co-operative Bank | 0345 212212 | Visa | £20,000 | 0.50 | 10.50 |
| Royal Bank of Scotland | 01702 362890 | Visa | £20,000 | 1.05N | 14.50N |
| NatWest Bank | 0800 200400 | Visa | £20,000 | 1.14 | 15.90 |
| STORE CARDS | | | | | |
| Telephone | Payment by direct debit | Payment by other methods | APR | Int. free | |
| John Lewis | in store | — | 1.39 | 18.00 | |
| Mark & Spencer | 01234 581681 | — | 1.97 | 24.80 | |
| Sears | in store | — | 1.94 | 25.50 | |

Best savings rates

| Telephone | Account | Notice or term | Deposit | Rate % | Interest interval |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------------|
| INSTANT ACCESS | | | | | |
| Portman BS | 01202 292444 | Instant Access | Instant | £100 | 4.80 Year |
| Shipton BS | 01756 700511 | High Street | Instant | £2,500 | 5.10 Year |
| Shipton BS | 01756 700511 | High Street | Instant | £15,000 | 5.25 Year |
| Shipton BS | 01756 700511 | High Street | Instant | £30,000 | 6.00 Year |
| INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS | | | | | |
| Yorkshire BS | 0800 378836 | First Class Access | Postal | £1,000 | 4.90 Year |
| Northern Rock BS | 0500 505000 | Great North Postal | Postal | £5,000 | 6.25A Year |
| Leeds & Holbeck BS | 0113 2438292 | Albion | Postal | £10,000 | 5.60 Year |
| Northern Rock BS | 0500 505000 | Great North Postal | Postal | £50,000 | 6.75A Year |
| NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS | | | | | |
| Norwich & Peterborough | 01733 391497 | Postal 10 | 10 day P | £10,000 | 6.10 Year |
| Coventry BS | 0345 665522 | Postal 50 | 50 day P | £2,000 | 5.45 Year |
| Scarborough BS | 0800 590578 | Scarborough 75 | 75 day P | £1,000 | 6.30 Year |
| Chelsea BS | 0800 272505 | 120 Account | 120 day | £25,000 | 6.75 Year |
| FIRST TESSAS | | | | | |
| Sun Banking Corp | 01438 744505 | | 5 year | £8,575 | 7.40 Year |
| C&G | 0800 717505 | | 5 year | £3,000 | 7.25 Year |
| Birmingham Midshires | 0645 720721 | | 5 year | £1,000 | 7.25 Year |
| Principality BS | 01222 344188 | | 5 year | £25 | 7.25 Year |
| FIXED RATE BONDS | | | | | |
| Leeds & Holbeck BS | 0113 243 8292 | Albion 97 | 30/4/97 | £25,000 | 6.30F Maturity |
| Newcastle BS | 0191 244 2244 | Portland Bond | 30/4/98 | £2,000 | 6.57F Year |
| Leeds & Holbeck BS | 0113 243 8292 | Albion 99 | 1/3/99 | £5,000 | 7.25F Year |
| Norwich & Peterborough | 01733 391497 | Fixed Rate Bond | 5 yr bond | £10,000 | 7.60F Year |
| CHEQUE ACCOUNTS | | | | | |
| Sun Banking Corp | 01438 744505 | HICA | Instant | £1,000 | 4.00 Year |
| Kleinwort Benson | 01202 502404 | HICA | Instant | £2,500 | 5.25 Month |
| Chelsea BS | 0800 717515 | Classic Postal | Instant | £10,000 | 4.75 Year |
| Chelsea BS | 0800 717515 | Classic Postal | Instant | £25,000 | 5.00 Year |
| GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (gross) | | | | | |
| Premium Life | 0800 414111 | | 1 year | £10,000 | 4.90FN Year |
| AG Life | 0181 680 7172 | | 2 year | £10,000 | 5.75FN Year |
| Financial Assurance | 0181 380 3388 | | 3 year | £5,000 | 5.90FN Year |
| Financial Assurance | 0181 380 3388 | | 4 year | £5,000 | 6.20FN Year |
| Pinnacle Insurance | 0181 207 9007 | | 5 year | £3,000 | 6.75FN Year |
| OFFSHORE (gross) | | | | | |
| Northern Rock, Guern | 01481 714600 | Offshore Instant | Instant | £10,000 | 6.45 Year |
| Northern Rock, Guern | 01481 714600 | Offshore Instant | Instant | £25,000 | 6.70 Year |
| Northern Rock, Guern | 01481 714600 | Offshore Instant | Instant | £50,000 | 6.90 Year |
| Bham Midshires, Guern | 01481 700680 | Fixed Account | 31.1.99 | £5,000 | 7.25F Year |
| NATIONAL SAVINGS Accounts & Bonds (gross) 0845 645000 | | | | | |
| Investment Account | | | 1 month | £20 | 5.00 Year |
| | | | | £500 | 5.50 Year |
| | | | | £25,000 | 5.75 Year |
| Income Bond | | | 3 month | £2,000 | 6.25 Month |
| | | | | £25,000 | 6.50 Month |
| Capital Bond | Series J | | 5 year | £100 | 6.65 F Maturity |
| First Option Bond | | | 12 month | £1,000 | 6.25 F Year |
| | | | | £20,000 | 6.50 F Year |
| Pensioner's Guaranteed Income Bond | Series 3 | | 5 year | £500 | 7.00 F Month |
| NS Certificates (tax-free) | | | | | |
| | 43rd issue | | 5 year | £100 | 5.35 F Maturity |
| | 9th Index linked | | 5 year | £100 | 2.50 + CPI Maturity |
| | Issue H | | 5 year | £25 | 6.75 F Maturity |
| Children's Bonds | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

FEAR OF FINANCE
Clifford German

Not so long ago it would have been impossible for a charitable organisation like Help the Aged to support, still less to advocate anything as radical as a compulsory state or private insurance scheme to fund the long-term care of the elderly and infirm who will make up an increasing proportion of the UK population over the next 30 years. Its proposals would have been exemplary but it would have concluded with a call for the Government to find the money.

The fact that Help the Aged has now accepted that long-term care might need to be funded privately, from compulsory contributions, is a measure of the way in which most people accept that the problem is too big for a government which has already spent much of the proceeds of privatisation programmes and North Sea Oil to fund out of future taxation.

It should also persuade the Government that Help the Aged's detailed contributions to the national debate on long-term health care, which will begin when the Government's consultation document is published shortly, should be seriously considered and not treated as the idealistic or ideological blatherings of some soft left pressure group.

Its starting point is that the present situation of paying for long-term care in either residential or nursing homes is neither appropriate nor fair. This is accepted almost universally, by the middle classes who have seen their assets and inheritances run down and sold to pay for care which the poor get for free, and now by the Government.

But the actual costs of long-term health care for those unfortunate enough to need it are beyond the means of most families, and

the full cost of insuring for indefinite care is almost as prohibitive. The Government's preferred plan for the state to take over the cost of care for individuals who take out a limited amount of private insurance once they have exhausted the proceeds of their policies and run down their assets to say £60,000, is only a palliative.

It will bring little new money into health care, it will still deplete the assets of those unfortunate enough to need care for long periods, and it does little or nothing to help the majority of elderly people, those who die before they are infirm enough to qualify for residential care and those who need care but in their own homes.

A fair and comprehensive solution requires that policies which do not pay out because the policyholders die before they can claim should pay something back to the families of the policyholders.

It also requires that individuals who need care in their own homes should be able to claim for the care currently given them by unpaid relatives and friends.

Age Concern believes that care which is free at the point of need is essential, but paid for in advance by compulsory contribution and providing care at home as well as in residential homes. It also proposes a national standard to assess the qualifications for care.

It has a great deal in common with proposals for financing future pensions out of compulsory contributions to a central fund. But neither concept will solve the transitional problem of providing funding for those now too old to provide fully or the ongoing problem of funding those who will never be able to afford it for themselves.

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* Sources: Micropal, buying price to selling price, gross income reinvested from launch (or closest available date on Micropal) to 15.4.96. Schroder UK Growth Fund plc 1st out of 9 since 2.5.94. Schroder UK Enterprise Fund 1st out of 105 since 1.8.88 (over five years, 3rd out of 123). Schroder Income Fund 1st out of 6 since 2.1.72 (over five years 5th out of 73). Schroder Smaller Companies Fund 1st out of 13 since 1.6.79 (over five years 24th out of 56). Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. The value of investments and the income from them may fall as well as rise and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. The levels and bases of, and reliefs from, taxation may change. Tax reliefs referred to are those currently available and their value depends on the circumstances of the individual investor.

April 20 1996



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side in Phoenicia's *Twelve Days of Christmas* (10.30)
score from British jazzier: *Orphy, Robinson*
Snap: Melthys Concert Hall, Aldeburgh
Suffolk (01228 453543) tonight
Illuminations Mixed-bill from the Royal Ballet
(above) featuring some of William Ashton's most
poetic creations: 'Sensuous, dream-like, and
performed by the fantastic dancer Russell
ROH, London (0771-304 4000) Wed
Scottish Ballet last night of the company's
highly acclaimed revival of *La Sylphide*, a two-
act fairy tale romance of the Scottish Highlands
Hull New Theatre (01482 226655) tonight

die pop mel-

Junior Free
Drawing Cross
£10.
the humanities
(0171-407)
Tonight
Page Punk
Junction: NW 10
to Junction.
Newbury
to folk songs
£8. Both
of Shepherd's
181-900
Sun 6.30pm.
side (01705-
with bebop
retrospect
night Rpm.
of music
(01223-
to
to
1944 0044)
country-traged
0171-438
£7.50-£15.
workshop
£10-£15.
James Jones
1917-49)
Hyde Park Corner, Sun 11am-5pm
London Film Exhibition
a centenary of film in the capital
looking at work London has been used as
at London and subject of film-making.
Mon-Fri 10.45-4.45 Sat 10.45-4.45 Sun 11-5
(0171-40 3690) @ Barbican Theatre Sat 11am-
5.30pm, Sun 12noon-5.30pm. Tickets 2-20. £2.
£3.50, sold £1.75.
the Church the lives and
discoveries of explorers Sir Francis Drake,
Captain James Cook and Sir John Franklin.
National Maritime Museum, Rye St. SE1
SE1 (0171-958-4212) 10.45-4.45. Barbican Hall, Mon-
Sun 11am-5pm, ends 30 June, 15.50, £2.50.
£4.50, child £2.
London Book Fair: A wide range of rare, anti-
quarian and second-hand books, maps,
engraved and decorative prints.
Royal National Theatre, Foyer South Bank
SE1 (0171-958-2253) @ Victoria St., Today
11am-7pm, free.
Northampton
Quality Antiques & Collectors Fair: Vast
quantities and collectables ranging from
a few pence to thousands of pounds.
Bergame Guildhall and (01948-23411) Sun
10.30-4.15, child free.
Oxford
Emancipator From Islamic Journeys Sheila
Palme's journey through Asia to discover
more about its peoples.
Pembroke Museum and South Parks Road
(01865-200927) Mon-Sun 11am-5.30pm, ends
today, free.
AUCTIONS
London: Islamic work, with main sales at
Christie's Tuesday (10.30am), Tussauds (2pm)
and Sotheby's, Thursday (10.30am). Sotheby's
also has Persian and 10-11am manuscripts and
miniatures from the British Rail Pension
Fund, Tuesday (14.00pm). Oriental miniatures
series Wednesday (10am), European
Oriental rugs and carpets Wednesday (2pm).
Christie's South Kensington, Oriental and
Islamic costume and textiles Tuesday
(10.30am), Persian and Oriental European
carpets and rugs Tuesday (2pm). Islamic art
works Wednesday (3pm).
Antique and collectables, Christie's,
South Kensington, Victoria (2pm). Spain
knives, including 'Ponies' (2pm). Spanish
Wednesday (10am).
English and Continental silver, including
caddy spoons, Friday 11am, Phillips (0746-
482181).
Bargains: Great sale of contents of Thurston
Barnes (Sussex), James Jones (Worcester)

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Monday, household and office furniture, Mon-
day (10am). Harrison & Sons Kingsway
Premises (024-720067).

Nashdale Antiques, Victorian and transport
Weekend/Thursday (10.30am daily), Peter
Wilson, Victoria Gallery, Market Street
(01-278-6378).

Newport Antique Irish decorated estate and
contents of a country house in Fowles, Thom-
day (10am). Morris Marshall & Poole (01-666-
636166).

Russian Artwork, Survey, 200 paintings by Russian
Impressionists from 1948, tomorrow (3pm) at
John Nicholson, The Auction Rooms, Long
field, Midhurst Road, Fernhurst (01428-
631727).

Schneiders, Antique and decorative furni-
ture, Tuesday (10.30am). Oriental carpet
and rug, Tuesday (2pm). European ceramic
and glass, Wednesday (10.30am). Sotheby's
(01405-789393).

Manchester Trade stocks, including books,
games, clothing, videos, televisions, novelties
etc., 12 noon, Arden Auctions, 11 Black-
friars Road, Salford (0161-634330).

Antiques Trade Gazette (0171-930-9974), Gov-
ernment Auction Notice (0177-337-7200). Fir-
de Book hotline 0336-42-32486).

FAIRS

Arndley April International Antiques and
Collectors, 1,500 picture. South of England
Showground, Wednesday (IACF 01676-
702525).

Bright Contemporary Print Show Part 1 &
Monday: Cranston Gallery, Barbican Cen-
tre, EC2 (0171-436-4007).

British Antique Galleries, Grants, 100
Halls, tomorrow (Four in One Promotions
01425-233495).

Adams Antiques, Royal Horticultural Hall, Via-
torian pottery, London SW1 tomorrow (0171-
254 0054).

Shipton Hall, Royal Bath and West Show
ground, today and tomorrow (County
Antique Society 01262-81111).

1. Road, SE 11:
Marsh Mass. Fr
or, Spans Mass.

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staying in

| MONDAY | | TUESDAY | | WEDNESDAY | | THURSDAY | | FRIDAY | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Television by Gerard Gilbert The Search for the Silver Arrow 8pm BBC2. (above) A good week for Edward Windsor, TV professional, what with tomorrow's docu-portrait of the Duke of Windsor, and this, his first commission for the BBC. The title refers to a priceless pistol Mercedes W154 (1933). Film: The Dark (Kathryn Bigelow 1987 US). 10pm C4. Witty modern-day vampire movie from the director of <i>Strange Days</i> (730025). Onassis 10.40pm BBC1. Michael Frayn celebrates Budapest (988984). | | Floyd on Africa 8.30pm BBC2. Starting as he means to go on - with a cheering glass of South African champagne - Keith Floyd hits the southern continent of Africa (4236). Without Walls: Not Just a Pretty Face 9pm C4. Philip Norman re-appraises Buddy Holly and rescues the seminal rock 'n' roller from his anodyne image (3066120). Edward on Edward 10.45pm ITV. (above) Prince Edward gets some insider information on his great uncle, the Duke of Windsor - but as to his own feelings... not a clue (797762). | | Film: Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet 2.05pm C4. Edward G. Robinson finds a cure for syphilis in a surprisingly strong biopic (584328). Modern Times 9.00pm BBC2. (above) What it takes to pass the legendary London 'taxi' driver exam, <i>The Knowledge</i> - two years and getting past a panel of six retired police officers (983521). Clive James Introduces Margaret Thatcher 10.40pm ITV. Has James bought shares in the flamboyant Cuban diva, who first came to public attention on <i>The Clive James Show</i> ? (548453). | | Reputations 9pm BBC2. Former Al Capone hit man, Sam Giancana, who rose to make and break Presidents - in this case John F. Kennedy, on whose election and assassination Giancana left his fingerprints (3293). Witness 9pm C4. (above) Lucky timing for this in-depth profile of the Unabomber - the Ludite terrorist who has killed three people and maimed 23 others. A suspect, Ted Kaczynski, was arrested three weeks ago. Joanna Head's film looks at Unabomber's motivation (83611). | | Clive James 8.30pm BBC2. Author Royce Ryland's portrait of Buckingham Palace and a guide to the royal household for summer (8572). Father Time 9.30pm C4. (above) Follows the life of a man who has always been the way (42539). Film: The Bachelor Party (Delbert Mann 1957 US). 12.10pm C4. Sharp Paddy Chayefsky script about a stag night gone wrong, the American male's last of women (423653). | |
| Radio by Robert Hanks Book at Bedtime (10.45pm R4) goes poetic this week, as Derek Jacobi marks the 60th anniversary of AE Housman's death by reading from <i>A Shropshire Lad</i> , the poet's elegy to a Britain that died with the First World War. | | What is the political mood of grassroots America? In the first instalment of <i>America's Dreaming</i> (7.20pm R4), a three-part World Tonight special, Simon Dring goes on the road with the repo man in unemployment-highlighted Iowa. | | A dull day's listening is cheered up by Simon Munnerly's socialist crusader Alan Parker - <i>Read Warner</i> (9pm R1). The last hope of the British Left this week gets on his soap box on behalf of caves. | | When will the international community get round to banning land "anti-personnel" devices? In <i>The Minecraze</i> (7.20pm R4), Brian Barron watches a British-led team of de-miners as they try to sort out the deadly legacy left in Cambodia. | | Clive James 8.30pm BBC2. Author Royce Ryland's portrait of Buckingham Palace and a guide to the royal household for summer (8572). Father Time 9.30pm C4. (above) Follows the life of a man who has always been the way (42539). Film: The Bachelor Party (Delbert Mann 1957 US). 12.10pm C4. Sharp Paddy Chayefsky script about a stag night gone wrong, the American male's last of women (423653). | |

Sunday television and radio

| BBC1 | BBC2 | ITV/London | Channel 4 | ITV/Regions |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| 7.15 Jim Henson's Animal Show (6238112). 7.40 Playdays (R) (S) (454841). 8.00 Breakfast with Frost (2472131). 8.45 The London Marathon. Live coverage of the 16th London Marathon. Men's entries include the event's winner for the last two years, Mexico's Dionicio Cerón (S) (97750860). 11.50 Now Celebrate. Tina Heath joins the congregation at St Stephen's in Twickenham (3647266). 12.35 The London Marathon. The competitive races have now been won, so over to those raising money for charity (S) (9990841). 1.25 News (9678642). 2.50 EastEnders Omnibus (S) (7250334). 4.00 Tom and Jerry (R) (704191). 4.10 Princess to Queen - the Queen's 70th Birthday. See Preview (5783247). 5.10 Masterchef 1996. Derek Johns and Imogen Stubbs are the guest dish dabbles (5428792). 5.45 News: Weather (364976). 6.05 Regional News (705860). 6.10 Songs of Praise. From St Nicholas's Church in Blakeney, Norfolk (S) (546547). 6.45 Antiques Roadshow. From Apsley House in London, home of the Duke of Wellington (S) (316976). 7.30 Hamish Macbeth. Robert Carlyle's grief-stricken Highland copper takes himself to a remote island, where he encounters an elderly woman trapped by an unexploded landmine (637131). 8.20 Birds of a Feather (R) (S) (984995). 8.50 News: Weather (364976). 9.10 The Naked Gun 2 1/2: The Smell of Fear (David Zucker 1991 US). Slightly sagging sequel finds spoof detective Leslie Nielsen trying to stop a dastardly plan to keep the country from adopting a new, cleaner energy policy (as if). Co-starring George Kennedy, Priscilla Presley and a certain O J Simpson (S) (8030131). 10.30 Kingdom of the Lost Boy. Everyman documentary explaining how, following the death of the Panchen Lama in 1989, the Dalai Lama chose a boy to be the reincarnation of the Panchen, but the child has disappeared and the Chinese who occupy Tibet have now come up with their own nominee (6318792). 11.40 Bye Bye Blues (Anne Wheeler 1989 Can). A Canadian woman loses track of her husband during World War II and doesn't know whether to start a new life or wait for his return (622353). 1.30 Weather (5133342). To 1.35am. REGIONS. Nil. 10.30pm Championship Special. 11.20 Kingdom of the Lost Boy. 12.30 Film: Hero at Large. 2.05 Weather. | 6.15 Open University: Pure Maths (7402773). 6.40 Maths Methods (8404711). 7.05 Learning for All: Learning to Care (6245402). 7.30 Strategy on the Screen (7370266). 7.55 The Thirteenth (4566518). 8.20 Biology (7626334). 8.45 Child Development: Attachment (8326976). 9.10 Children's BBC: Highlander. 9.35 X-Men. 10.00 Fully Booked. 12.00 Star Trek. Kirk and Spock investigate the strange magnetic pull of a planet (R) (1360792). 12.50 A Week to Remember (39663605). 1.00 Regional Programmes (96264). 1.30 World Championship Snooker. David Vine introduces the second day of the 17-day championship. Tony Drago v Steve James and David Harold v Neal Foulds are the matches being played to a conclusion (S) (8413605). 4.55 Rugby Special. John Inverdale presents highlights of Orrell v Bath, plus today's showpiece match at Twickenham when reigning champions Leicester take on a Rest of the World XV (S) (2883082). 5.55 World Championship Snooker. The climax of Ronnie O'Sullivan v Alain Robitoux (S) (749860). 6.50 The London Marathon. Highlights (688605). 7.30 A History of British Art. See Preview (S) (635773). 8.20 The Money Programme. What is known about the Americans who are buying British electricity companies (S) (5397171). 9.00 Fantasy Football League. Susan Tully and Danny Baker from Friday's edition (S) (1570). 9.30 World Championship Snooker (S) (81605). 10.30 The Music of Chance (Philip Haas 1993 US). Intelligent and unusual adaptation of Paul Auster's story of a professional card-player (James Spader) and the dither (an excellent Mandy Patinkin) who's he persuaded to bankroll him, and what happens when they try to flee old-timers Charles Durning and Joel Grey. Recommended (Followed by Weather) (S) (83634150). 12.10 Vice Squad (Arnold Laven 1953 US). Documentary-style police procedural starring Edward G. Robinson as an LA cop searching for the two bank robbers who murdered a fellow officer (8326464). To 1.40am. 2.00 The Learning Zone: FETV Short Cuts. Customer Care (90087). 4.00 Languages: Suenos - World Spanish (10071). 5.00 Business and Work. Walk the Talk (55754). 5.30 How Do You Manage? (S) (40735). To 6.00am. REGIONS. Wales: 1.00pm Welsh Lobby. 4.55 Scrum 5. 9.00 WNO GAA Concert. 10.30 World Championship Snooker. 11.30 Film: The Music of Chance 1.05 Weather. 1.10 Fantasy Football League. Nil: 1.00pm Now You're Talking. | 6.00 GMTV. 6.00 The Sunday Review. 6.30 News and Sport. 7.00 The Sunday Programme (59266). 8.00 Disney Club (8271531). 10.15 Link. Profile of Wendy Barber, an artist who paints with her mouth (S) (5894995). 10.30 Morning Worship. From Robert Hall Memorial Baptist Church, Leicester (S) (61860). 11.30 Blessed Are They (S) (6399889). 11.55 Chalk Talk (S) (8183334). 12.30 CrossTalk (82537). 1.00 News. Weather (42599082). 1.10 Jonathan Dimbleby. Dimbleby and studio audience quiz Sir James Goldsmith, billionaire pro-referendum MEP (S) (3280624). 2.00 Yesterday's Heroes. Alan Ball and Mike Channon (3568). 2.30 The Sunday Match. Live coverage of Sunderland v Stoke City (6269452). 5.10 Cartoon Time (771976). 5.20 London Tonight (1900808). 5.45 News. Weather (635318). 6.00 Happy Birthday Ma'am. Grovelly title to this 70th birthday tribute to The Queen. Trevor McDonald links the archive footage (850). 6.30 Surprise! Surprise! (S) (18518). 7.30 Doctor Finlay When Dr Finlay takes a walking holiday in the Highlands, unexpected passion awaits (S) (22995). 8.30 You've Been Framed (R) (S) (2957). 9.00 News. Weather (32353). 9.15 The Barrows. Your attitude to this year's bash will be coloured somewhat by your feelings about Angus Deayton, who hosts in the presence of Princess Anne. Get past that hurdle, and there's an Oscar rerun in the film section with <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> taking on <i>Leaving Las Vegas</i> and <i>Braveheart</i> (what is it about this lot of gollap that is attracting so many nominations?). <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> looks a hot favourite to clean up the TV awards, where <i>Panorama's</i> interview with Princess Di finds itself up against <i>This Morning</i> and <i>Esther</i> . Nice one (216808). 11.15 The Whistler. What a feast to tread (Charles Sturges 1991 UK). Almost pandoric EM Forster adaptation with Helen Mirren making an unwise match in Italy, and relations Rupert Graves and Judy Davis hot-footing to Tuscany to investigate. Also with Helena Bonham Carter (95540119). 1.20 Sledge Hammer (2978261). 1.50 The Music. The Jeff Healey Band (4222087). 2.50 How Sweet It Is (Jerry Paris 1968 US). James Garner and Debbie Reynolds caper their teenage son on a trip to Europe (863209). 4.35 Shift (R) (8721822). 5.30 News (37261). To 6.00 am. | 6.15 Trans World Sport (R) (6168808). 7.10 Take 5. With The Magic Roundabout, Bush Tails, Nattalia, Ivor the Engine and Juggy Bear (S) (5430537). 7.40 The Magic School Bus (S) (7344841). 8.10 Sonic the Hedgehog (7622518). 8.35 The Trap Door (4089976). 8.40 Blast Off (S) (1729173). 8.50 Bitter Mice from Mars (R) (8336353). 9.15 Saved by the Bell (R) (182537). 9.45 Dumb and Dumber (S) (1113826). 10.00 The Bird (S) (5879686). 10.15 Sister Sister (S) (4952860). 10.40 Rocko's Modern Life (S) (2152131). 11.05 Insektors (9937889). 11.20 NBA Raw. Basketball action. The Phoenix Suns v Houston Rockets (3744247). 12.15 Mission Impossible (3744247). 1.20 Laughter in Paradise (Mario Zampi 1951 UK). Relatives each inherit £150,000 with strings attached. Alastair Sim (the best thing in the movie), for example, has to earn himself a 28-day jail sentence (4713245). 3.05 An Inspector Calls (Guy Hamilton 1954 UK). The lovely Alastair Sim again, in a decent adaptation of the JB Priestley play (8513402). 4.30 The Pink Panther (8579179). 5.05 Mysteries of the Jungle Sea. The creatures living around the coast of Papua New Guinea (6022191). 5.35 Holyoaks (R) (S) (575995). 6.05 Babylon 5. A series of bombings aboard Babylon 5 cause trouble. As they would (900044). 7.00 Triumph of the Nerds. How the 24-year-old Bill Gates joined forces with IBM to create a PC that would give them a 50 per cent share of the market (S) (8353). 8.00 Encounters: Plague Doctors. See Preview (S) (4777). 9.00 Birds of Death. Secret History repeat of how the newly formed RAF bombed villages in far flung outposts of the Empire as a cheap and effective way of curbing rebellious tendencies (R) (4537). 10.00 Mona Lisa (Neil Jordan 1985 UK). Jordan's beautifully lurid thriller about decent, simple ex-con Bob Hoskins (rarely better) given the job of chauffeuring high-class hooker Cathy Tyson to her punters - and falling in love with her in the process. Michael Caine is wonderfully sleazy as the kingpin in the thick of all the filth (576315). 11.55 Football Italia (945570). 12.55 My Life as a Dog (Lasse Hallstrom 1985 Swe). See The Big Picture (783342). To 2.45am | ANGLIA As London except: 2.00pm A World of Wonder (3586). 2.30 Kick Off Live (2087549). 5.00 Heston (827458). 11.15 Film: The Great Escape (1963). CHESHIRE As London except: 2.00pm Good Advice (3586). 2.30 The Central Match - Live (9259452). 5.10 Our House (5672601). 5.40 News (567537). 9.15 The Lloyds Bank (5672601). 11.15 Film: The War of the Worlds (1938). 12.15am Film: Portrait of a Woman (8339939). 1.40am Film: The Music (4255060). 2.40am Film: How Sweet It Is (95540119). 4.30am Film: Shift (8721822). 5.30-5.50am Film: Shift (8721822). DEVON As London except: 12.25pm News: Newsweek (570315). 1.25pm News: The Times (570315). 2.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 2.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 3.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 3.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 4.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 4.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 5.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 5.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 6.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 6.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 7.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 7.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 8.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 8.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 9.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 9.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 10.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 10.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 11.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 11.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 12.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 12.30 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 1.00 The Rock and Roll Show (570315). 1.30 The Rock and Roll Show 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The big picture

MY LIFE AS A DOG
Sun 12.55am C4

A ludicrous time to be showing one of the most enjoyable movies of the 1980s, so time to get to grips with those video recorders. You won't be sorry. Set in 1959 Sweden, director Lasse Hallström's rite-of-passage chamber stills the amazing Anton Glanzelius as the 12-year-old boy who identifies more with Lelka, the dog that the Soviets sent into space, than with his own highly strung, invalid mother and bullying older brother. His world changes for the better when he is sent to live with relatives in the country.

Television preview

RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND
by Gerard Gilbert

FDR Sat 8.05pm BBC2
Court TV Sat 11.30pm BBC2
Princess to Queen Sun 4.10pm BBC1
Happy Birthday Ma'am Sun 6pm ITV
A History of British Art Sun 7.30pm BBC2
Encounters Sun 8pm C4

Royalty – like sitcoms and news analysis – is just one of those things that the BBC do better than ITV. For instance, Sunday marks the Queen's 70th birthday, and like a parvenu at Duck House, ITV have come over all grovelly and uncouth with *Happy Birthday Ma'am* (Sun 6pm). This unfocused tumbola of a royal documentary is presented by Trevor McDonald, OBE. One half expects it to wrap up with a funny story about a cat stuck up a tree. Instead we get Sir Cliff Richard.

Meanwhile, that experienced old courtier the BBC has produced the respectful and gently moving *Princess to Queen* (Sun BBC1). This benefits from the voice-over of Ludovic Kennedy – his words always seem to catch on his throat – and from being sharply focused on Ma'am's upbringing and young adulthood. Thus both those troublesome children are neatly erased, and we are reminded of the human being that went into making the monarch. There's plenty of unfamiliar footage, including HM beaming in hush with a Greek sailor. Apparently the future Queen decided Philip was The One after witnessing him

perform in the gymnasium of the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. She was 13 at the time.

Maybe there's something to be said for marrying your cousin. Franklin D. Roosevelt did. In the particular case of this quietly ambitious young man, it must have helped that the orphaned Eleanor Roosevelt was the favourite niece of the then President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt that "steam train in trousers", as he was memorably described. All this courtesy of FDR (Sat BBC2), a handsome new four-part documentary series about the man who was to be elected President four times.

I had noticed that our chief art critic, Andrew Graham-Dixon, hasn't been hanging round the Independent office of late, and now I know why. He's been hanging round art galleries, museums and country churches making the sterling *A History of British Art* (Sun BBC2). Like Kenneth Clark, Graham-Dixon exercises a whole wardrobe full of suits – and in the clarity of his vision and the coherent way he meshes the whole island story together, he's going to give the old boy a run for his money.

The story of British art really begins at the Reformation – because reformationists smashed every piece of religious decoration (which was the art of the Middle Ages) they could take their hammers to. If you think Damien Hirst is an iconoclast, then you don't know the proper meaning of the word.

Watched non-stop, a 24-hour cable station showing nothing but legal trials would do strange things to the mind. People wouldn't be able to ask you the time of day, for example, without you huddling in a conference with your lawyer. But condensed into weekly chunks, *Court TV* (Sat BBC2) is fascinating viewing, throwing up all sorts of issues which are usually obscured in our somewhat tabloid perspective on crime and punishment. This week, former Manson "family" member Patricia Krenwinkel comes up before the parole board. Objecting to parole is Sharon Tate's younger sister, Patricia. Equally gripping is *Encounters* (C4 Sun), which documents the medical response to last year's Ebola virus outbreak in Zaire, the deadliest bug known to man. And I thought *The Shane Richie Experience* had that honour.



The big race

The London Marathon
Sun 8.45am BBC1

The London Marathon (Sunday 8.45am & 12.35pm BBC1 & 6.50pm BBC2), the 26.2 mile race from Greenwich Park to Buckingham Palace, is the one occasion in the year when it's perfectly normal to see grown men dressed as chickens and emus running through the streets. The stats on the race always impress: more than 28,000 competitors, including Liz McColgan, who together get through 500,000 bottles of water and 88 pounds of Vaseline during the course of the day.

Saturday television and radio

BBC1

- 7.25 News: Weather (1278407).
7.30 Children's BBC: Willy Fog, 7.55 Robinson Sucroe, 8.15 The Racooners, 8.45 Marvel Action Hour, 9.45 Grange Hill, 10.15 Sweet Valley High.
10.35 The O Zone (S) (1885049).
10.52 Weather (41680-9).
10.55 Grandstand. 11.00 World Championship Snooker. Stephen Hendry begins his title defence against Jason Ferguson. 12.20 Football Focus. 1.00 News. 1.05 World Championship Snooker. 1.55 Racing from Newbury. 2.00 Arlington International Racecourse Snooker. 2.25 Racing from Newbury. 2.30 Lanes End John Forster Stakes. 2.40 World Championship Snooker. 2.50 Racing from Newbury. 3.00 Triplemint Greenham Stakes. 3.10 World Championship Snooker. 3.25 Racing from Newbury. 3.30 Ladbrokes Spring Cup (Handicap). 3.40 World Championship Snooker. 3.50 Football Highlights. 4.00 World Championship Snooker. 4.30 Motorcycling: action from the second round of the Motor Cycle News British Superbike Championship from Thruxton. 4.45 Final Score (S) (1678202).
5.15 News: Weather (1718407).
5.25 Local News: Weather (1657581).
5.30 Stay Tuned! (S) (964391).
5.55 Big Break. On the opening weekend of the World Snooker Championship, this feels suspiciously like overkill (S) (974778).
6.25 The New Adventures of Superman. Lois and Clark are led into a virtual reality world by computer genius Jason Xavier, son of Lex Luthor (832730).
7.10 Confessions (S) (976933).
7.50 The National Lottery Live. Opera star Jose Carreras is Anthea's helpmate (S) (210223).
8.05 Bugs. A mysterious virus devastates an experimental strain of wheat (S) (205778).
8.55 News and Sport: Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (690556).
9.15 The Burbs. Joe Dante 1988 US. Very silly and very enjoyable satire on American conformism, with ultra-conservative Tom Hanks becoming obsessed with the new family in his spick and span neighbourhood. Bruce Dern and Carrie Fisher co-star, and there's truck loads of movie in-jokes for those who like that sort of thing (S) (38428136).
10.50 They Think It's All Over. Frank Skinner and Teddy Sheringham from last Tuesday's edition of the New last sports quiz (S) (1657907).
11.20 Alligator (Lewis League 1980 US). Highly amusing mock eco-horror from a script by John Sayles about an alligator that was flushed down the toilet as a baby and has grown huge on the corpses of animals used in hormone experiments and similarly flushed into the sewers (333117).
12.50 Weather (1267957). To 12.55am.
REGIONS. Wales: 4.55pm Wales on Saturday. 5.25 Wales on Saturday. 5.55 Big Break. NI: 4.55pm Northern Ireland Results. 5.25 Newsline.

BBC2

- 6.00 Open University: One Small Step... (7447846). 6.25 Maths (7459681). 6.50 Health Visiting and the Family (8433223). 7.15 The Enlightenment: Angelica Kauffman RA (8292310). 7.40 Electrons and Atoms (7309778). 8.05 The Albert Memorial (1132223). 8.30 Women, Children and Work (1212407). 9.45 Our Health in Our Hands (8131136). 10.10 Just in Time? (5042440). 11.00 Global Tourism (4175339). 11.25 A Tale of Four Cities (502117). 11.50 Insights into Violence (3541584). 12.20 Milestones in Science and Engineering (562833).
12.35 The Treasure of the Sierra Madre (John Huston 1948 US). The first in a John Huston double-bill is his memorable, cumulatively powerful piece of storytelling set down in Mexico, where Humphrey Bogart's drifter, Walter Huston's canny old-timer and Tim Holt clean-cut young man are prospecting for gold. The first third, in particular, is as good as anything Huston did (96714204).
2.35 Moby Dick (John Huston 1956 US). Critics divided over Gregory Peck's miscast Ahab, but there's no denying the beauty of the washed-out cinematography or the boldness of the rest of the casting (including Richard Basehart as Ishmael, and Orson Welles' reading of Father Mapple's sermon) in Huston's faithful, very expensive adaptation of Herman Melville (19619310).
4.30 World Championship Snooker. Live action from the World Championships. Peter Ebdon takes on New Zealand's Dene O'Kane, while Dave Harold meets former World Championship semi-finalist Neal Foulds (S) (63273010).
6.50 What the Papers Say. John Sweeney of the Observer reviews the week's press (S) (905469).
7.05 News and Sport: Weather (504914).
7.20 Correspondent. BBC Moscow correspondent Rob Parsons reports on the desperate lives of Moscow's street children in post-Communist Russia. Plus George Alagiah on the last of South Africa's Kalahari bushmen (S) (614681).
8.05 F D R. As in Franklin Delano Roosevelt. See Preview, above (S) (762488).
8.50 Have I Got News for You. Last night's opening edition of the (mostly) Paul Merton-less comedy news quiz. Eddie Izzard steps in for Merton, who is off filming (hopefully) not any more Galton and Simpson scripts and David Aschby MP fills a guest slot (S) (4310).
9.30 World Championship Snooker. Defending champion Stephen Hendry continues his match against Jason Ferguson, while Ronnie O'Sullivan takes on Canada's Alain Robitoux (S) (34407).
11.30 Court TV. See Preview, above (S) (353001).
12.20 Later with Jools Holland. Bjork, Tricky, the Boo Radleys, Graham Parker, and Brazilian drum, dance and vocal troupe Otimod conclude the repeated series (Followed by Weather) (R) (S) (4882605). To 1.25am.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV. 6.00 News: Weather. 6.10 Re-wind. 6.30 Bananas in Pyjamas. 7.10 Barney and Friends. 7.40 Disney's Wake Up in the Wild. 8.55 Mighty Morphin Power Rangers (7604092).
9.25 Teletext. 9.30 News. 9.40 News. 9.50 News. 10.00 News. 10.10 News. 10.20 News. 10.30 News. 10.40 News. 10.50 News. 11.00 News. 11.10 News. 11.20 News. 11.30 News. 11.40 News. 11.50 News. 12.00 News. 12.10 News. 12.20 News. 12.30 News. 12.40 News. 12.50 News. 1.00 News. 1.10 News. 1.20 News. 1.30 News. 1.40 News. 1.50 News. 2.00 News. 2.10 News. 2.20 News. 2.30 News. 2.40 News. 2.50 News. 3.00 News. 3.10 News. 3.20 News. 3.30 News. 3.40 News. 3.50 News. 4.00 News. 4.10 News. 4.20 News. 4.30 News. 4.40 News. 4.50 News. 5.00 News. 5.10 News. 5.20 News. 5.30 News. 5.40 News. 5.50 News. 6.00 News. 6.10 News. 6.20 News. 6.30 News. 6.40 News. 6.50 News. 7.00 News. 7.10 News. 7.20 News. 7.30 News. 7.40 News. 7.50 News. 8.00 News. 8.10 News. 8.20 News. 8.30 News. 8.40 News. 8.50 News. 9.00 News. 9.10 News. 9.20 News. 9.30 News. 9.40 News. 9.50 News. 10.00 News. 10.10 News. 10.20 News. 10.30 News. 10.40 News. 10.50 News. 11.00 News. 11.10 News. 11.20 News. 11.30 News. 11.40 News. 11.50 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Floundering fathers

Men are struggling more than ever to juggle children with work, and with freedom. If society cannot change, divorce will continue to soar. **Jim White** reports

John Lawrence is a typical Nineties father. He is at the sharp end of a battle that men increasingly feel they are losing, a battle to reconcile a chronic shortage of time, their freedom and their own sense of masculinity. The compromises they are striking are becoming more and more difficult in the modern world, a world of ever enlarging work demands and ever diminishing security of employment.

A freelance photographer, Mr Lawrence (pictured here) describes his relationship with his offspring in terms that will strike many as familiar.

"When I'm not with my children, it's because I'm working," he says. "When I'm not working, I'm with them 100 per cent of the time. I have no social life of my own because basically, since I'm a freelance and need to take on all the work I can, I'm away so often working I can't justify not being with them when I'm not."

Justify to whom? "Well, justify to my partner, them, myself."

Insecurity and guilt, the two predominant conditions of the Nineties man, are nowhere more acutely felt than in his relationship with his offspring. Indeed, according to the Institute for Public Policy Research, the left-leaning think-tank, there is a major problem with fatherhood in this country. A report due to be published next week by the IPPR entitled "Men and their Children" suggests that society's attitudes towards fatherhood are so confused and confusing, only a major shift in public policy on education, paternity leave and access to children after divorce can prevent the problem becoming a crisis.

"While day-to-day mothering is widely debated, fathers' private lives remain largely hidden," states the report's introduction. "And in the media, fathers are negatively represented. Yet most fathers are keen to be closer to their children than were their own fathers. A recent European survey reveals that more than 85 per cent of both men and women think fathers should be very involved in bringing up children from an early age."

This is not a David Thomas/Neil Lyndon-style whinge about the over-weening power of feminism, not a rallying call to arms: "Fathers of Britain unite and fight, you have nothing to lose but your packet of deodorised nappy sacks." Rather it is a recognition that, since we accept that fathers are generally good things, some help to allow modern man to do his bit would be in society's long-term interests.

There are as many approaches to fatherhood as there are fathers. Even within the narrow social band that is represented by my own office, it varies from those men whose contact with their children is limited to occasionally sleeping under the same roof, to those who wear the bleary eyes of midnight feeding and crusty patches on the shoulder as a badge of pride. But one feeling is universal round here. As the IPPR report suggests, most fathers consider contact with their children to be a mutually beneficial experience and are anxious to do more for their offspring than their fathers did for them.

"I think my father considers me to be

a right poof," says one father of three. "He never ceases to be condescending about the amount I do with my children: 'shouldn't she be doing that?' is what he usually says."

Until a generation ago, large sections of parenting were closed to men; to use a parliamentary analogy, they didn't get involved in early day motions. Women used to do all that grubby stuff alone, indeed the clichéd image of birth in films and literature was the father pacing around outside the delivery room, piling up the cigarette stubs until he heard the first shrill parp of his baby's arrival.

For our fathers, infancy, too, was something the women looked after. Male involvement tended not to begin until their children were about five, when men could cherry pick the good bits, take charge of

It is an unusual expectant father who does not attend antenatal classes, joining in the mooing exercises

the romantic introduction to adulthood: fishing, football and fighting. In most cases the women were responsible for everything else, including discipline, in which the father was generally demoted as a useful threat, a dark figure of retribution, "wait till your father gets home".

Thanks mainly to the forces of feminism, (not to underestimate the invention of the disposable nappy) men have been introduced into a much broader, earlier participation. Around this office it is an unusual expectant father who does not attend antenatal classes, sitting round in circles on the carpet holding his partner's hand and joining in the mooing exercises. And few men would willingly give up the chance to be at the birth, equipped with a video camera and a look of surprise on his face at the extent of his partner's vocabulary.

But once the baby has appeared, the degree to which the man should be involved has yet to be decided upon. In the past it was easy: he wasn't. Now, no one is quite sure. There is not a standard role model and decisions tend to be made within an individual partnership. Or rather, decisions tend to be left unmade and the upbringing of a child becomes a source of simmering conflict.

"A mother has had a physical connection with their child for nine months," says one mother. "The father hasn't. Really he cannot connect with the child while it is puking and crying and he only starts to enjoy it when it's talking and kicking footballs around. And I think a lot of

women feel resentful about their partner's clumsy attempts to get involved at that stage in something they are really not any good at."

No wonder a new report by neuroscientists at Queen Mary College, published yesterday, reveals that as many as one in 10 new fathers are prone to post-natal depression. Who wouldn't be gloomy: they feel obliged to help and are ridiculed for their efforts.

Indeed, talk to most fathers about their relationship with their children and it is not long before two other relationships begin to dominate the conversation: that with their partner and their work-place.

"My wife simply doesn't believe I do enough," says one father. "There's no contract between us, there's only friction. Her view is that when I get home from work I should take over responsibility for the kids. Mine is, I need to recover from work."

"All I'm looking for is a 50/50 split of the responsibility," says one working mother. "At the moment I'm lucky if it's 80/20."

This kind of response suggests that it is in the division of domestic labour once a child has been born that the battle of the sexes is being fought.

Feminism has encouraged women to interrogate life much more than we have," says one dad. "They have higher expectations than we do and thus they're unhappy about everything. They assume we could and should be doing more about the place. There is a calculation in their minds that you should make up for the time absent from the home when you return, and, if you point out you're knackered, you're merely attempting to avoid something you never wanted to do in the first place. Basically we are paying for the sins of our fathers."

Give or take the odd near-darling, few modern men would challenge their partner's rights to a career, but once the baby has appeared, the degree to which the man should be involved has yet to be decided upon. In the past it was easy: he wasn't. Now, no one is quite sure. There is not a standard role model and decisions tend to be made within an individual partnership. Or rather, decisions tend to be left unmade and the upbringing of a child becomes a source of simmering conflict.

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would treat them as anything other than equal or would refuse to pull their weight around the house. But the moment a child arrives the balance of a relationship is thrown into confusing kilter. Many mothers are now working, which in itself changes the old expectations about the mother doing the domestic while the father earns the money. But more than that, the modern attitude to white collar workers, in particular, places demands on men that are rarely consistent with enlightened parenting.

According to the IPPR's report, one third of fathers of young children work more than 50 hours a week and new dads clock up four times as much overtime as the childless.

"Men are put in a difficult position," says one working mother. "They are expected to be everything, breadwinners and caring, sharing partners. It's tough, particularly as blokes don't seem to get any lee-way at work. I've got a child and I can say, right, it's six o'clock. I've got other priorities, I'm off home. That's understood in a way that it wouldn't be for men. I'm a manager myself and I'm not sure how sympathetic I'd be to a man who said he couldn't come into work because his child was ill, for instance."

Given the pressure from work, many modern fathers find that it is only at the organisational times - getting them up, getting them dressed, or giving them a bath - that they get to see their

children. All these moments can easily be avoided by staying late at the office, or getting in a little bit early.

"The only contact I seem to have with my kids," says one dad, "is yelling at them to get up or to go to bed. God knows what they think of me and frankly I'm not sure I'm contributing much to their upbringing."

The IPPR's report suggests that more help in the workplace could help fathers to meet some of their parenting requirements. Not just standardised paternity leave

(something mocked by the Conservatives, the party of the family) but encouraging a culture change that could allow flexibility in working hours for fathering in the same way as concessions are accepted for Territorial Army duties, sports or trades union commitments. Without such imaginative initiatives, the report believes, Britain will continue to suffer from the highest divorce rate in Europe, with all the attendant social problems. The problem is that, increasingly, the pattern of tiny feet is not so much evidence of the fulfilment of a relationship as the beginning of the end.

Photograph: Pauline Lawrence



Jo Brand's week

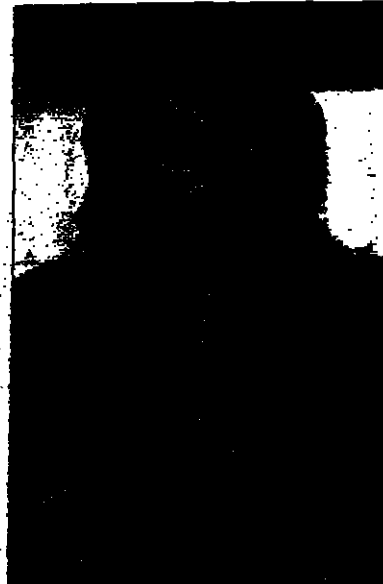
I was sorely afraid that the weather in Australia would be too much to cope with, but since we have been in Melbourne it has poured with rain every day and I love it. The poor old Australians cannot believe it and look very miserable indeed. They scurry about with huge umbrellas while us Brits stroll about unperturbed.

I have met some other English comedians here and two of them are shortly to set off into what we know in Blighty as "the outback" for a short holiday. Living in a country which is so small, the nearest civilisation is spitting distance, it is difficult to conceive the degree of isolation here. My friends are staying on a sheep station, which is not even called anything, and the directions they have been given are to note the last existing signpost on their road and watch until 112 kilometres shows on the car dashboard then turn off. They have been warned that if they don't do this, their destination will pass them by. There are phone boxes every thousand kilometres and when they get there, the nearest shop is an hour and a half's drive. Never again will I moan about having my local 24-hour garage half a mile away.

At my first show last night, the audience seemed fairly enthusiastic about getting rid of the monarchy, and my negative feelings towards the royals were not improved when I read that Prince Williams had met Cindy Crawford as a "special treat" at Easter. Not a special treat that most mothers could hope to compete with, I'm sure. However, the prince's adolescent lust in that direction is seeming proof of his increasing sophistication, given that in the past he has stared longingly at Pamela Anderson. How reassuring to know that even the toff blokes are treating women as objects at a tender age.

Meanwhile, Cindy is said to be swooning over Val Kilmer, he of *Batman Forever*. They apparently managed nights on the town while Joanne Whalley, his wife, was heavily pregnant with their second child. Three cheers for Hollywood sisterhood, eh girls?

Life-saving on aeroplanes is always so much more dramatic than, say, on the 68 bus. Recently, a young British tennis player was brought back from possibly snuffing it by a nurse on a flight from Kuala Lumpur. The player, Lucy Needham, began having spasms, and was



Swooning Cindy, Will's treat

drifting in and out of consciousness, causing a nurse, Pauline Robinson, to rest Lucy's head in a bucket of ice. (Don't ask me why, I was only a psychiatric nurse.) This apparently saved her life. Meanwhile, a doctor on the plane had pronounced his



diagnosis as a panic attack. (Wrong.) So, next time you're taken ill on a plane, demand a nurse, not a doctor.

While scrolling through the British news on CompuServe here in Melbourne, I came across the strange headline "Unknown Bear To Present Pop Show". Now I know animals are clever and some pop presenters are not too bright, but has the crossover gone that far? Having presented *Top of the Pops*, I know you have to be fairly on the ball to avoid being decapitated by swooping cameras.

On further investigation, it appears that a Dutch woman called "Bear" is going to present *Top of the Pops*, having bombarded the producer from her home in Holland with endless calls and examples of her work there. So, it seems that dedicated pestering does pay off. Follow the bear, everyone.

A group of widows in India whose husbands were killed by the "Bandit Queen", Phoolan Devi, 15 years ago, plan to campaign against her, as she has now become a political candidate.

The widows are to travel to the area in which Phoolan Devi is standing for election, taking with them a teenager whose physical and mental development was apparently stunted when she was thrown to the ground by Phoolan Devi during the

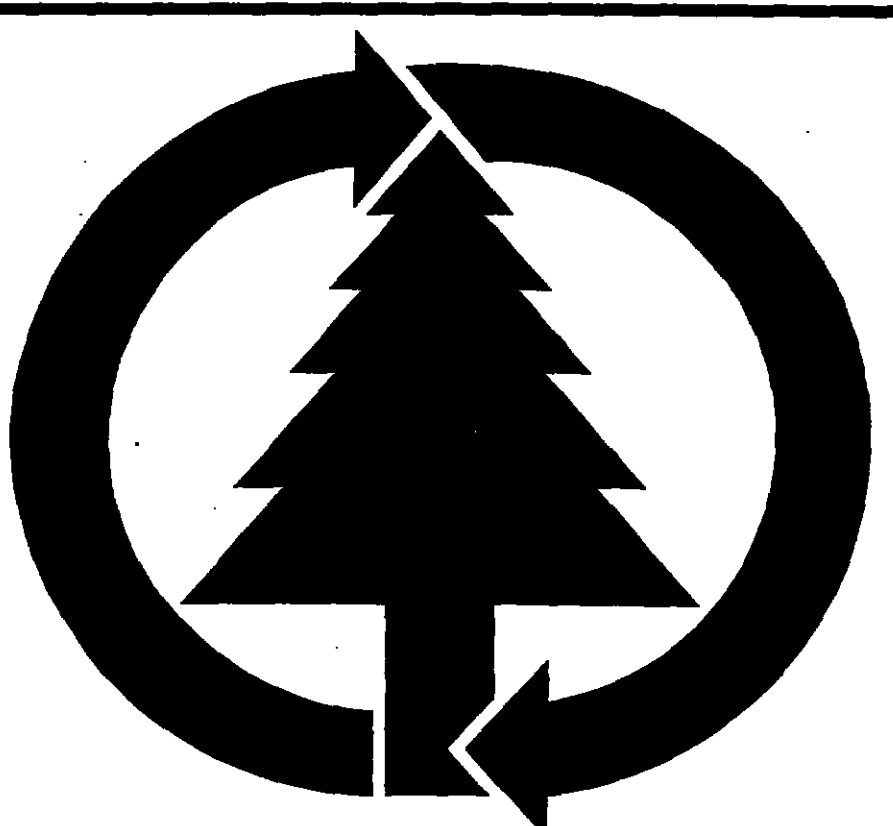
massacre. The Bandit Queen apparently killed the husbands in revenge for her rape and the murder of her lover.

While reading this piece in the newspaper, I found myself glancing at the date of the paper to see if it was 1 April, because this story sounds too fantastic to be true. Maybe I cling to the vain hope that women being pulled into the territory of violence, which is almost exclusively the domain of men, can only be a fairy-tale.



Phoolan Devi in the land of violence

Things are looking up for the church. Coffers are filling again after some problems with a property slump in the Eighties. So who can be reassured by this news. The poor? The needy? The infirm? I think not. The church tends to keep its assets to itself. I wonder what Jesus would have to say about it. Perhaps it is all right for Tories to actually go to church, as long as they don't try and convince themselves they are Christians.



NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 34.5% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1995.

Source - Pulp & Paper Information Centre.

Democracy is gagged by the language of party unity

Elections everywhere. Tomorrow, the first round of the parliamentary contest in Italy. In a month, Israeli votes, which helps to explain the intensity of Operation Grapes of Wrath. In June, Russia elects a new president, quite possibly a Communist. Later in the year, the American public chooses between Bill and Bob – as well as taking part in the biannual returns to Congress. Here, Tory mortality and Northern Irish events permitting, there could be a general election within months.

The common denominator in those elections is party. Advanced societies are fissiparous, more diverse, less class bound, washed by the tides of trade and culture we handily label globalisation – yet we still seek to organise our government on the closed and sectarian principle that party represents a block of interests. In such a mobile, flexible, shifting society, there ought to be a multitude of parties. Instead, what we have is the old Anglo-American duopoly. Even that duopoly cannot escape the forces of change. Instead of a multiplicity of parties, we have parties with a multiplicity of splits, factions, internal divisions. Running any large party these days requires organising unruly, shifting coalitions, quite frequently involving some stray members of other parties. That is the lesson both John Major and Tony Blair should draw from another week when divisions within parties were more politically potent than divisions between them.

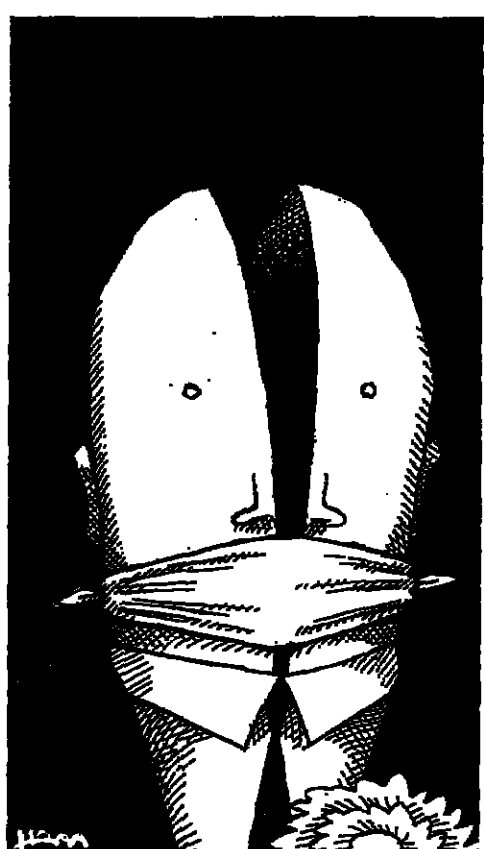
This week's conventional wisdom says party leaders should loosen up, admit dissent. People are mature enough to appreciate backchat in the ranks. Voters quite like it when Clare Short unbuttons her lip not because they want the Labour double-

decker to topple over but because stifled views make for immature politics. One of the things we most want to know from Tony Blair is how much a new Labour government would tax us. It is one of the things he least wants to talk about. Labour's stress on collective discipline parallels the Tory line in the Eighties that you had to make the state stronger to make it smaller; the new Labour line is you need to make the party more liberal to take the country in a more liberal direction.

As for the Tories, Wittgenstein is Central Office's pin-up philosopher, with his principle that you have to be silent about the things that cannot be said. Europe is their great unspeakable. Some say the Tories have always ridden two horses – free-market liberalism and authoritarian conservatism. Like an accomplished circus performer, the rider sometimes seems to be about to plunge into the sawdust but ends up straddling the rearing beasts, hat off, waving to the crowd. They are not alone in being split over Europe. Labour is just as split and even more silent about its Euro-divisions, according to a survey last week.

The Liberal Democrats too have issues on which they prefer to keep their counsel. Drugs is one. Beards and Fair Isle sweaters the leadership can live with, but it is not keen on open debate about legalisation of prohibited substances. Yet out in society drugs is a totemic issue. Attitudes towards drug use and classification link with generation, education, family experience, region.

So we have a situation in which issues that are hotly debated in the country at large – whether Ecstasy is safe or deadly, whether a single currency is good or bad – are met with a wall of



silence from much of the political class, one of whose jobs is to test arguments in public debate.

The result is not just suppressed politics. Worse than that, elements of dishonesty creep in. Lines are peddled over and again not because they are believed but because they are the line. So arguments are not tested in the open. As a result, policies are vulnerable to being suddenly exposed as unworkable or misguided. The suppressed political debate about drugs gets expressed intermittently, often by people outside the game. Those inside are too busy biting their tongues to provide even a bite of sound.

The trouble with our current parties, obsessed as they are with internal discipline and the authority of leadership, is not that they are too tight but that they exist as they do. The sight of an Alan Howarth "crossing the floor" is ludicrous. He has not converted to socialism, the Labour leadership does not believe in it. He does not come from any of the social groups historically identified with Labour. It is just that Labour offers a slightly more comfortable home. Alan Howarth ought to join with Emma Nicholson in the Torbay and Stratford-upon-Avon nice persons' party, so-called, intelligent and probably representative of a wide swathe of middle England.

What would a party system look like that was more representative of the diversity of our society? It might embrace a graduates' party (its future numbers assured), an urban singles' party and possibly – in an age when the very identity of many younger people is taken from their leisure pursuits – a party-goers' party, a retirement party, an anti-dowdizing party.

One objection to going too far down that road, driven on by proportional representation, is Italy's chaotic and corrupt politics. But aren't fragmented Italian parliamentary politics more honest than ours? Italian politicians, on the floor of the chamber and in the senate, berate concentrations of media ownership, argue forcibly for welfare and pensions reform, bring open and honest about regional disparities in wealth and earning power.

Party reform means parliamentary reform. Root and branch reform of the Constitution has, for the first time in generations, become a political possibility. As partisan identification with parties has weakened, respect has grown for independence of mind, the prized quality we want our judges, our teachers, children, civil servants and scientists to possess in spades. We need a party system that will ensure greater independence of thought and argument, while bringing out into the open the reality of government through coalition building.

This isn't completely beyond the bounds of possibility. Europe may yet drive a wedge through the Tory party. English nationalism in both Labour and Conservative parties may be inflamed by devolution to Scotland. New Labour will soon find its internal divides over tax, to name just one issue. However, it is highly unlikely that new parties will emerge and it is most likely that the factions will stay together behind their facades of party unity. The reality will be that party politics will be much more like Italy's chaotic coalition building – without the open argument – than we might realise. Our leaders know that, even though they don't like to admit it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Assault on Lebanon: this is no way to end the cycle of 'terrorism'

Sir: In 1978, after the first Israeli invasion of Lebanon – to "root out and destroy" Palestinian "terrorists" – I saw, as co-ordinator for International Aid in Lebanon, the Hizbollah take root in the rubble of the destroyed villages of south Lebanon and in the slums they fled to. The indiscriminate violence of the Israeli invasion of 1982 dug even deeper roots for freedom fighters and fundamentalists.

The Palestinian "terrorist" movements had, of course, themselves taken root in the rubble of homes in Palestine and the refugee camps of Jordan, Lebanon and Gaza, to which they had been forced to flee (funded by the USSR, Libya, Iraq and others).

The Zionist "terrorist" movements, Irgun and Haganah, took root in the pogroms and ghettos of Europe and years of oppression and persecution.

How is it then that in the name of lasting peace Mr Portillo, Mr Peres, Mr Clinton or anyone else can still believe in the effectiveness of crushing

terrorism by terrorising whole populations. Even if Hizbollah is "crushed" and the Iranian and Syrian sponsors brought to heel, what new "terrorist" movement is now taking root in the massacre of innocents, the destroyed homes, the overcrowded buildings to which new refugees have fled in the past five days? History will always provide sponsors.

ALEXANDRA ASSELY
London W14

Sir: The accidental shelling of the UN base housing refugees in southern Lebanon is indeed a tragedy, adding to a long history of bloodshed in the region. However, Hizbollah is ultimately to blame for unleashing its deadly rockets just 300 metres from the base.

The rationale behind Hizbollah launching missiles from such close proximity to a civilian population is conceivable for one of two reasons: to turn these defenceless people into shields to deter retaliation, or to induce a terrible carnage in an attempt to defame Israel

and derail the Middle East peace process. As abhorrent and ludicrous as this rationale may seem, it comes to no surprise considering Hizbollah's – and its brother organisation, Hamas – past willingness to exploit its people as "martyrs" by strapping bombs to their bodies, which detonate in heavily populated areas.

The key to halting violence in the Israel-Lebanon border region is to stop or diminish Hizbollah's economic, military aid from Iran. Only then can the Middle East peace process progress.

PETER M AGULNICK
Huntington, New York, USA

Sir: The attempts to depict the Israeli action in Lebanon as a sudden reaction to outrageous provocation will not hold water. Israel has always wanted a compliant regime in Lebanon. Moshe Sharett's diaries vividly illustrate the arguments in the Israeli cabinet of the 1950s over whether it was possible to set up a puppet Maronite state in the country. Sharon's fetid

of Bashir Gemayel in the early 1980s was a similar effort to recreate a neighbour on Israeli terms, with appalling consequences. Now that Lebanon is controlled by Syria, Israel's most intransigent local opponent, the hopes for an obedient regime have been temporarily dashed. But Peres (the "peace-maker") can still signal Israel's strength to Syria and win his election in the process.

As long as Israel continues to occupy southern Lebanon and to support an unpopular puppet army there, the resentment of the local populace will find its outlet in groups such as Hizbollah, born as it was out of that occupation. If Israel withdraws, there is hope of peace. If it does not, there is none.

CHINA MIEVILLE
London W11

Sir: Amongst all the debate surrounding Israel's latest incursion into Lebanon, it was interesting to see someone mention the role of water (Letters, 18 April).

True, water has been an

important factor in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and a major stumbling block in the peace negotiations – it is water, not security, which concerns the Israelis most over the return of the Golan Heights, for example. It is also true that the Litani could offer Israel some additional water. But to believe that Israel would go to war for it ignores several facts. To take water from the Litani "without significant concessions in return" would require a permanent Israeli presence in the "security zone", and probably beyond. Because of Lebanese projects upstream, there is not a great deal of water flowing in the lower Litani, especially in the summer when it is most needed.

The stress put on water supplies in Israel in the 1970s and 1980s has been met by a concerted government effort since 1986 to reallocate water away from inefficient and intensive uses (mainly agriculture) to more sustainable projects.

ANTHONY CURRIE
London SW9

Boot camps do not work

Sir: The announcement (18 April) of plans to establish a military-style boot camp for young offenders in Colchester suggests that the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, is more concerned with appearing tough than with taking effective action to cut youth crime.

He has ignored the experience of boot camps in the USA. This was spelt out to him in 1994 by his own officials when, after a visit, they reported that "there is no basis for this type of approach in terms of reoffending... we have tried this approach before, with detention centres and abandoned it as a failure." This view was confirmed to me by Ronald Moskiki, Superintendent of the New York State Boot Camps, during my visit last summer when he told me: "Reducing recidivism is not a goal."

There is genuine public anger at the levels of youth crime. Our youth justice system is characterised by delays, inconsistencies and a failure to take swift action to prevent first-time offenders embarking on a life of crime. Hardening young offenders into persistent adult criminals is not the answer.

JACK STRAW MP
(Blackburn, Lab)
Shadow Home Secretary
House of Commons

Sir: It is difficult to know whether to laugh or cry at the planned use of the Colchester

military corrective training centre as a boot camp for young offenders. Boot camps make great television for politicians wishing to look tough, but successive research studies have shown that tactics designed to train soldiers for war are not an effective way of rehabilitating juvenile delinquents.

Colchester does currently enjoy a low reconviction rate. But this is for two specific reasons. First, most of those sent there have committed offences (like the use of soft drugs) which would not result in a prison sentence in the civilian courts. Second, the regime at Colchester offers an excellent, relevant and intensive training course for servicemen and women who are to return to their units. Neither of these factors apply to young offenders.

During the early 1980s, the present government introduced the so-called "short, sharp shock", a similar package of macho strutting and paramilitary bombast. It was abandoned because magistrates increasingly opted for more constructive penalties, and because the Home Office's own evaluation showed that the shock programme did not work. Taxpayers' money should not be wasted repeating this folly.

STEPHEN SHAW
Director
Prison Reform Trust
London EC1



'Vulgar' but welcome: the proposed Ferris wheel

Photograph: Reuters

Wheel of good fortune for Londoners of the future

Sir: I am delighted that your reporter welcomes a "bit of vulgarity on the river" (16 April). London needs modern additions that add interest to the world's finest city.

Too often it has been assumed that London can only remain a great city if the architecture is fossilised in a Victorian sediment, laid down by the heir to the throne. Great cities change and develop and the pyramid in the Louvre and the Grand Arch at La Défense show that, with confidence and style, change can add interest and delight to a historic city such as Paris.

The Wheel must be built, and we will soon learn to love

it. As a four-year-old I saw the Skyline and the funfair of the 1951 exhibition. I was not old enough at the time to realise that they were destroyed by Churchill as examples of socialist celebration.

The Wheel is to be funded by a commercial organisation. As a socialist, I have no problem with that. I just hope that the incoming Labour government – despite having purged itself of any scintilla of socialism – will have more vision than Churchill and allow the Wheel to delight my, as yet unborn, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

HUGH COLLIS
London N8

Sir: I find it hard to believe that responsible officials have given the go-ahead for the Ferris wheel on the South Bank.

The main objection is one of scale. The grouping of the Houses of Parliament and the buildings on the opposite bank of the river reflect an architectural balance.

This wheel would destroy totally. One can imagine coachloads of foreigners going away in disbelief that the British had been so insensitive as to destroy the appearance of their capital.

ALAN JORDAN
Guildford,
Surrey

Age of monarchy

Sir: By reaching the age of 70 the Queen has acquired membership of a rather exclusive club. Only four of her predecessors became septuagenarians: George II, George III, Victoria and George V.

PETER PRIOR
Weybridge, Surrey

French sound

Sir: It is only the French-derived words which drop the "h": "an oïel", "an 'istorical novel" (letter, 18 April). The purpose is to facilitate pronunciation, as with the "n" in "an egg".

TONY BRENNER
London N3

Masari left in a legal limbo

Sir: The Home Office's decision (report, 18 April) to grant Mohamed al-Masari, the Saudi dissident, Exceptional Leave to Remain will satisfy no one. ELR is a lesser form of protection than full Refugee Convention status, leaving Mr Masari in limbo, living in Britain at the Government's whim. It is obvious that Mr Masari is reasonably likely to face persecution if returned to

Saudi Arabia, and therefore he deserves full refugee status. The Saudis, in turn, are unlikely to be soothed by fine bureaucratic distinctions between one status and other; for them it all looks like harbouring the enemy. So the Government takes no principled stand, either for human rights or for trade and diplomacy.

Dr ANDREW SHACKNOVE
Oxford

Major and the 'Mail on Sunday'

Sir: I am surprised that in your interestingly argued article (19 April) on the disillusionment of the "Tory press" with John Major, you should choose to quote part of the *Mail on Sunday's* leader column out of context. This gave the wrong impression of the paper's conclusions. The leader ended, after your extract: "The issue may no longer be whether the Tories lose the next Election but how

they can best minimise the scale of defeat. Margaret Thatcher was dispossessed of the Tory leadership when her party felt that she was unelectable. John Major was, of course, chosen in her place. But has the wheel of political fortune now turned full circle?"

JONATHAN HOLBOROW
Editor
The Mail on Sunday
London W8

Give private finance a chance

Sir: Andrew Marr ("A public finance scandal in the making", 11 April) must know that governments all over the world are recognising the use of private finance as the only way they will be able to deliver the social and economic infrastructure their people expect.

He says that PFI may cost the taxpayer more than "ordinary public spending". What does he mean? Are the millions spent annually on maintaining and running badly designed and under-specified schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and office blocks paid for by the taxpayer over the last 30 years "ordinary"? Are the rents paid annually to the private sector by government for the doubtful privilege of maintaining and insuring yet more of these kinds of buildings "ordinary public expenditure"?

Of course they are, although some of us would call them extraordinary too. The initial cost of a building is but a small part of the cost of maintaining it and running it during its lifetime, and looking back, to say 1970, or whenever we could agree was the heyday of "ordinary public spending", surely no one would agree that the cheapest capital cost always delivers the best value for money. These buildings are proving expensive to maintain and wasteful to run.

A government is not a better government because it owns buildings, any more than any business is a better business because it owns an office or a factory. Governments (and businesses) use buildings, but an increasing number of people in both sectors think it is better for others to manage them and be responsible for the risks of ownership, allowing occupiers to get on with the main purpose of their existence.

The PFI is based on a good idea. It is an idea which should (and in time, will) be just as attractive to the private sector as it is to government. It offers a better way of getting things done and spreading risk more fairly.

If the responsibility for managing an asset throughout its life is placed squarely with the person who designed it, the investment which follows is likely to be better designed, easier to maintain and more efficient in its use. Why don't we give a try? At least it gives us a chance of replacing all those horrors we built in the 1960s and 1970s.

ANDREW RUSSELL
Chairman, PFI Forum
The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
London SW1

Bug-beater

Sir: Why bother to change millions of lines of code to defeat the Millennium Bug (report, 18 April)? The problem may be solved by shifting all dates 50 years, before any computer processing. A few lines of code would subtract 50 from all two-digit formats for years before 2100 and add 50 to the rest. Thus 1999 and 2000 become 49 and 50 respectively. If the cost approaches \$400bn, I will happily accept a small consultancy fee from those needing assistance.

Dr DAVID WINTERBOURNE
St George's Hospital
Medical School
London SW17

SANDI TOKSVIG Hello, goodbye



Two points – first: welcome to the letters page. I had trouble finding it myself and would congratulate anyone who gets this far into any newspaper. Second – apologies for the photograph. It was taken some time ago and makes me look like I came second in a cookery competition. Apparently there has to be a photograph as this is a "column".

"Write about whatever you like," they said. "We want a sort of personal yet transcendental view of life." OK. I wasn't here last week and I shan't be here next week, so why not. My personal yet transcendental view of life is that there are too many columns. Now, marvel, dear Reader, as, in less than 700 words, I write myself out of a job.

I shall be bold in doing so with a two-prong plan to a) decry the current concept of the column and b) defend Judith Chalmers. (All right, it's an unusual approach, but I'm new). It doesn't seem possible to turn the pages of a British paper without the photograph of some journalist's face leering out with a "personal opinion" – I use the word "journalist" with some caution. It still has an ancient aura of being connected with fact or, heaven forbid, analysis, and that doesn't quite cover a lot of today's contributors.

I don't quite know what the photograph is for. Maybe it's to make us think what a nice person the writer must be even though they may be writing perfectly horrid things about other people. Which brings me to Judith Chalmers. The other week I was reading a column that alleged to be a television review. It was written by a very smiley woman called Jan Moir, whom I've never heard of. She had obviously had a very tiresome week and perhaps hadn't had time to watch much actual television. Instead, she spent half her allotted wordage in an astonishing attack on our Ms Chalmers. Here was thrust, here was insight, here was, I should have thought, the makings of a rather good libel case. So cross was Ms Moir with Ms Chalmers' very existence that she concluded Judith was a "jammy old madam". That's not very nice, is it? If you follow the advice that a critic should be "the midwife, not the abortionist" to creative work, that's not exactly helpful.

But Ms Moir is merely treading a populist path of prose where insult replaces insight and (can I say this without being hurtful?) Oh, what the hell, it's a one-off, one suspects, that cruelty makes up for any lack of actual creativity. (Let me put my hand up for a personal interest here. The "columnist" Victor Lewis-Smith once said there couldn't be a caring God or he wouldn't have given ugly people like me a sex drive. I've never met the man, so I don't know what's made him quite so grumpy, but, then again, I can't think of a single piece of creative work from him. Such a void probably would make you bad tempered.)

This week everyone who ever had an opinion on anything has been spouting on about Fergie and Clare Short in fairly equal measures. Here's a curiosity – neither of them is very popular with opinionated columnists because both of them dare to express opinions.

The *Daily Express* got a "celebrity psychic" to bring us the inside story on Clare. In contrast to other ramblings, it was a rather nice piece. Said Clare was "refreshingly gutsy, down to earth, and a colourful good sport". Good oh, but instead of that wouldn't it have been more interesting to analyse what appears, from the outside, to be an increasing reluctance on the part of the Labour Party to allow internal debate? You know, politics not personal.

Well, there we are. I'll never get a nice review from Jan Moir. Victor Lewis-Smith will think of something else horrid to say about me and no one will ever ask for my opinion again. Still, for what it's worth – I've never met Judith Chalmers, but I bet she's really nice.

David Aaronovitch returns next week from holiday.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

I am a West Indian peasant who has drifted into this business and who has survived. If I knew the secret, I would bottle it and sell it – Trevor McDonald, broadcaster

Those who have done best out of the Thatcher decade will be expected to contribute most to repairing the damage – Chris Mullin, Labour MP

We are opposed totally and fundamentally to the mass slaughter of healthy animals... We cannot burn cows to convince European politicians that public health is safeguarded – Bob Stevenson, president of the British Veterinary Association

Denis met this stunning young Tory candidate on a blind date in 1949, and 40 years later found himself calling the most famous address in the land home. There is an element of the fairy tale about that – Carol Thatcher about her father

The girl's a damn good writer. Pity that she didn't have a better subject – Sir Denis Thatcher on Carol

Denis Thatcher played his part admirably. He was Stan Laurel to Margaret's Oliver Hardy – Sir Julian Critchley, Conservative MP

We live in a crime-producing civilisation. If there are terrorists, it is because we have produced them – Yehudi Menuhin

July 2012

comment

A false prophet for British Muslims

Many will mourn Kalim Siddiqui but few will miss his extremism, says Paul Valley

"There are some traditions that we Muslims maintain which have rather gone out of fashion in the secular Christian world. One of them is not speaking ill of the dead." The speaker was one of the leading Muslim figures in Birmingham. I shall omit his name, for reasons which will become clear. He was responding to a request to comment on the death of Kalim Siddiqui, the leader of the Muslim Parliament. But in private his views were fierce in their condemnation of the man who claimed to speak for Britain's 1.5 million Muslims.

This private verdict was echoed by prominent Muslims in Leicester, Bradford, Manchester and London yesterday, caught on their way to or from the mosque for Friday prayers. At the heart of their disdain was the role the Muslim Parliament had come to occupy since it was founded by Mr Siddiqui in 1992.

"It was arrogant and mischievous to call it a parliament. It was born out of a wilful separatism to create the idea that Muslims want to exist as some kind of state within a state," said one senior Islamic academic. "It spoke for no one except its own members, and those were just appointed by committees which were chosen by Siddiqui. In effect the so-called parliament was hand-picked by him, and its only real purpose was to create a platform for him. It was an unrepresentative organisation in every sense. It is very important to challenge the myth that has grown up in the media that the Muslim Parliament spoke for Britain's Muslims. It did not."

What inspired such vehemence was the extremist fundamentalist oratory of Kalim Siddiqui and his great skill as a manipulator of the media. A former sub-editor at the *Guardian*, where he worked for eight years while completing a PhD in social studies, he wrote his thesis on Max Weber's theory that conflict has a positive role in society. It came to public notice that he intended to put Weber's ideas into action when, in 1989, he asked an audience of 300 Muslims in Manchester to raise their hands if they agreed with the *fatwa* that pronounced a death sentence on Salman Rushdie. Siddiqui narrowly

escaped prosecution, but the British press seized upon him with horrified enthusiasm and he learnt how to manipulate its indignation into an effective recruiting sergeant for his tiny but fanatical following. The rest of the Muslim community was angered. It was an anger which, in private, was undiminished yesterday. "It was all just clever media hype," said one Muslim leader. "He resurrected the issue of Rushdie at the last meeting of his so-called parliament because the previous three or four meetings had been ignored by the press."

"In the end everyone saw through him - even the Iranians," said another. "He backed Iran during the war with Iraq, partly as a way of getting at the Saudis whom he detested, but eventually even the Iranians found that he was an empty shell and they dropped him." Indeed, earlier this month a spokesman for the foreign ministry in Tehran, where President Rafsanjani's government is engaged in negotiations with the EU to bury the *Satanic Verses* dispute, pronounced: "Kalim Siddiqui does not speak for Iran. It is only the British who take him seriously."

Kalim Siddiqui was not without his good points. Even his opponents acknowledge the importance of his fund-raising for schools to ensure that Muslims succeeded within the British education system. And he was alert to the need to create a forum that included the youth and women (constituencies many Muslim leaders do not take seriously); but Siddiqui was proud of the fact that his *so-disse* parliament contained 16 per cent women compared with only 7 per cent in the Commons.

But few of his colleagues feel that the good outweighed the ill. "At a time when relations between Muslims and the rest of the community are becoming more rather than less strained," said one, "it will take years to put right the damage he has done."

"The Muslim Parliament was a one-man show," concluded another. "It will die with him. Perhaps once it is cleared out of the way it will be possible for a body to emerge which genuinely reflects and represents the diversity of Muslim traditions in this country."

PROFILE: The Queen

What does the future hold for the troubled monarch, who is 70 tomorrow, asks Frank Prochaska

"The heart of kings is unsearchable," says Proverbs. Even in our intrusive, media-driven age, the phrase has application to Queen Elizabeth II. Her many biographers have treated her as though she were a public monument and not a living being at all. Clearly, she is dutiful and likes dogs, horses, the Commonwealth and her grandchildren, but this is hardly the stuff of a full-blooded biography. One of the few things that can be said about the Queen with certainty is that she has extraordinary self-control. Is there anyone else in the world so widely seen, yet so little known? Like Bagehot's royal magician, she has contrived to efface herself in her office, leaving friends and enemies alike to wonder and to fantasise.

A monarch's personality cannot be unaffected by its institutionalisation. The Queen's has taken on the baggage of her office. Indeed, one of the things that sets the Queen apart from her subjects is the weight of the past. Unlike most children she had a built-in reverence for age and history, which absorbed her individuality in the interest of the monarchy's greater good, in the certainty that she would have to abide by ancestral vocations and a fixed inheritance.

Her parents were, naturally enough, a formative influence. They passed on an exceptional sense of public service and a set of values that were inter-war, if not Victorian, in flavour. Her first public address, in May 1944, was to promote the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Children in Hackney, east London, a charitable institution named after her mother, where she pledged her support for voluntary traditions at a time when state intervention in welfare was growing by leaps and bounds.

Like her father and grandfather before her, Queen Elizabeth II has sought to provide both a unifying symbol of the nation and a benevolent image that would offer a focus for civil society. Middle England found the monarchy a theatre of loyalty, which gave the nation's disparate elements a sense of belonging, unity and purpose. The reverence for monarchy encouraged people to feel that they were part of an unfolding historical narrative, and not simply dedicating their lives to mammon.

In recent years, such sentiments have begun to dissolve. Tabloid invention and the self-destructive tendencies of members of the



Head of state: the best hope for the Crown's future lies in the value of the Royal Family's charitable activities

Martin Spaven

Long to reign over us?

Royal Family have led to a resurgence of republicanism. Yet there may be a greater, long-term threat to the monarchy - the acceleration of cultural change.

New technologies, demands for institutional efficiency, European union, ethnic diversity, and the globalisation of culture threaten so long identified with British royalty. Interest in traditional forms of British history, so often taught around kings and queens, shows signs of collapsing into heritage.

Is there anyone else in the world so widely seen, yet so little known?

However much attention she may give to modern life (and she is always opening institutions and inspecting innovative technology), she is bound to carry a weight of the past with her and feel to many that she remains in the 1950s.

As so much of the monarchy's mystery has been dissipated by the decline of deference, royal misdemeanours, and the malice of the media, it seems likely that the

monarchy will be judged in future on more practical grounds: the benefits it brings society. As the Queen knows, the Crown's bedrock of support has shifted over this century from political circles to the armed services and especially the charitable sector. Such a shift was at least partly a policy designed by palace advisers and implemented with flair by Prince Albert, Edward VII and George V. The Queen has added her own touches to the tradition, for instance the sizeable contribution to the fund set up to

commemorate the murdered headmaster Philip Lawrence.

The most important development has been its growing identification with worthy causes and voluntary institutions. As the Crown's political power declined, members of the Royal Family forged a new and popular role as patrons, promoters, and fund-raisers for the deserving and underprivileged. This humdrum charitable activity

has become more important than the "dignified" duties of the monarchy. Through philanthropic work at home and abroad, the Queen has been able to swim with the tide of post-war and post-imperial social currents - egalitarianism and internationalism - and helped to disengage the Crown from the old ruling class in the minds of the public.

Today, the dutiful members of the Royal Family spend more time on good works than on anything else - there were about 2,000 royal charitable engagements in 1994. The Crown's patronage list extends to more than 3,000 organisations (the Queen alone has 800). Voluntary work is the "efficient" part of monarchy. As the historian David Cannadine remarked, "charitable activity has become the place where the royal culture of hierarchical condescension, and the popular culture of social aspiration, have successfully merged."

The Queen gave away £208,385 from her private income in 1994 to voluntary causes. An educated estimate would be that the extended Royal Family's patronage is worth at least £100m a year to the voluntary sector, probably much more. Such sums have a wider significance when put in the context of the cost of the monarchy to the taxpayer (£78m on 1990-91 figures). If a republic were to be declared, would or could a president carry out 2,000 charitable engagements a year to such effect?

The Queen's credentials as a social democrat should not be underestimated. One of the strongest arguments in favour of retaining a monarchy is that by propping up so many voluntary societies it acts as a defender of civil life and liberty, a bulwark against the arbitrary tendencies of government. The likely failure of any government to conquer social ills, combined with the sense of individual powerlessness that will arise from European union and the growth of a vague global culture, should provide fresh opportunities for the monarchy to ally itself with popular causes beyond conventional politics.

The best hope for the future of the Crown will probably lie in the development of its social policy - the active promotion of civic welfare, social pluralism, and the association of democracy so dear to the Victorian royal family. The question for the Queen is whether she can persuade her heirs to serve likewise.

The writer's 'Royal Bounty: The Making of a Welfare Monarchy' is published by Yale University Press.

Peace is not on Hizbollah's agenda

Moshe Raviv argues that Israel was compelled to retaliate after exhausting diplomatic channels

Israel has accepted the call by President Clinton, which was echoed by British Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, for an immediate cease-fire. Hizbollah responded to this call by continuing its Katyusha bombardment into northern Israel during the night. Israel "acknowledged" the call, by sending a message to Hizbollah to continue their murderous activities. The governments of Syria and Lebanon know full well that the Israeli objective is to reach peace agreements with their countries, thus achieving a comprehensive peace between Israel, all its neighbours and with the Palestinians. They also know that Israel has no territorial claims on Lebanon and that the problem of the security zone in south Lebanon will be solved by the peace agreement.

For a long time now, the inhabitants of northern Israel and Israeli military positions have been exposed to unpredictable and indiscriminate barrages of Hizbollah Katyusha rockets that have killed and injured people and destroyed property. During 1995, Hizbollah launched 344 attacks against Israeli troops. These attacks continued into 1996, and on 9 April, Katyusha salvoes fired at Galilee wounded 36 civilians.

Hizbollah used the villages and towns in south Lebanon as a staging ground for firing these rockets. When Israel returned fire to the source, they claimed that we were hitting civilian targets. This method of shielding their terrorist launching pads behind the civilian population and taking cover behind innocent women and children became a consistent policy. On 18 April 1996, Hizbollah leader Muhammad Reza reaffirmed that "the civilian population constitutes our defensive belt".

Moreover, the objectives of Hizbollah are not limited to the situation in south Lebanon. Their aims are much wider. This is best illustrated in a quote by their leader, Hizbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah, in December 1994: "I say to... all the enemies' leaders, that Islam is the Islam of struggle and martyrdom is coming to you Jews, in south Lebanon, in Palestine, and all over the world. It will vanquish you."

Two developments caused Hizbollah to intensify their activities against Israel. The first is the obvious success of the peace process with the Palestinians and Jordan. Militancy and religious extremism are losing ground with every step of progress. Iran, true to its anti-peace policy,



Israel too has had to grieve: the cycle of violence can be broken only by a comprehensive peace settlement including Syria

Photograph: AP

decided to magnify its efforts in order to undermine the peace process. They are using Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hizbollah as vehicles to achieve their objective. We have seen this with the series of suicide bombings by Hamas and Jihad in Israel and we are witnessing the same pattern with the Hizbollah operations in Lebanon.

Peace contradicts their agenda. Peace brings stability. Stability yields prosperity. Religious extremism, however, thrives on anarchy, on poverty and on misery. They see the peace process as an obstacle to the fulfilment of their sinister aim: the spread of extremist fanaticism. As a result, they wish to derail peace and kill the hopes of millions of people in the Middle East. We, together with the international community, must ensure that they fail.

Second, they loathed the impressive gather-

ing at Sharm-el Sheikh. On 13 March, 29 heads of state and governments, including President Clinton, Prime Minister John Major, Chancellor Kohl and 13 Arab delegations headed by Egyptian President Mubarak, King Hussein of Jordan and King Hassan of Morocco, convened in the Egyptian resort, with a strong determination to fight terror and encourage the continuation of the peace process. The sight of these world leaders standing firm against terror was not to the liking of the extremists.

During their initial attacks, we displayed utmost restraint. We used diplomatic channels in order to make it clear that tranquillity must prevail on both sides of the border. The US government made every effort to induce the Hizbollah terrorists to stop shelling Galilee, but to no avail. With full encouragement, inspiration and supply of arms from Iran, with Syria sanction-

ing their activity and Damascus serving as a conduit for the shipment of arms from Iran to Hizbollah in Lebanon and with the Lebanese government maintaining that it is incapable of acting against them, they continued to terrorise Galilee with impunity.

It is the primary responsibility of every government to protect the lives and property of its citizens. We could not wait any longer and shirk our duty to protect our people, who spend the nights in shelters, whose children were evacuated and whose properties were damaged by Katyusha shells. Thus we were compelled to launch a military operation. Its objective is limited: to hit Hizbollah operation centres and staging areas. We have no confrontation with the government or people of Lebanon, for whom we would like to see peace and stability in the same way as we would like to have peace on our side of the border.

However, during the past days, in which Hizbollah have fired close to 300 Katyusha rockets at Israel, we found that no less than 19 Hizbollah firing positions were located about 200 metres from United Nations observer posts. A full list of these positions has been transmitted to the United Nations. As the *Independent's* reporter in Lebanon wrote: when a soldier from Fiji tried to prevent Hizbollah from firing rockets into Israel from close to his position, he was shot in the chest by a Hizbollah terrorist.

When Israel returned fire on Thursday 18 April to the Hizbollah launching ground in Kanana, many innocent civilians were sadly killed, something that we deeply regret. A UN spokesman admitted that only shortly before fire was returned, Hizbollah used the area for shelling Israel.

Thus the full responsibility for this tragic loss of innocent lives rests entirely on the unscrupulous shoulders of the Hizbollah terrorists. Israel made it very clear that its objective is to bring peace to the inhabitants of Galilee and, if there is peace in Galilee, there will be tranquillity on the Lebanese side too.

It is imperative, therefore, that the governments of Syria and Lebanon rein in Hizbollah. They should do so immediately, before they continue to cause immense suffering and more loss of life.

The writer is Israeli ambassador in London.

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M&G throws BET a lifeline by rejecting Rentokil offer

MAGNUS GRIMOND

M&G, the fund management group, has thrown a lifeline to BET by publicly rejecting the £2bn unwanted offer from rival business services group Rentokil. The vote of confidence from its biggest shareholder has raised hopes in the BET camp that it can fend off the bid by the final closing date on Friday.

M&G is thought to have already attempted to broker an

agreed deal between the two sides. In a letter to Sir Christopher Harding, BET chairman, the fund management group praised chief executive John Clark's success over the past few years in rescuing BET from its "parlous" state in 1991.

"Some commentators regard the 'rescue' aspect of managing poorly performing companies as a comparatively easy part of the job. John has not only accomplished this most successfully, but has also been consistent in

setting out his plans for the future and is delivering results in line with these strategies.

"We see his future involvement at BET as a key issue and were reassured to hear at the meeting he intends to stay with the company for some time."

M&G "has little difficulty in supporting the board of BET and will, therefore, not be accepting the current bid from Rentokil."

Nigel Morrison, an M&G fund manager, said Rentokil's

bid was too low. "We have a high regard for Rentokil's management, but unfortunately they were not prepared to pay quite enough."

Rentokil was quick to downplay the M&G move. Charles Grimaldi, director of corporate affairs, said: "As far as we know, historically they always support the existing management."

Some City fund managers agreed that M&G's stance was no surprise. One said: "It is very

much M&G's style. It is very much their public attitude to hostile takeovers [to support incumbent management], so I don't think you will find anyone anywhere remotely surprised by their attitude."

But others pointed to the unusually public nature of M&G's support for the BET management. One large shareholder in the group who did not want to be named said: "I was surprised by the strength of M&G's public view on this. I

thought [the bid] was dying a death and I think this will make people take a long and hard look at this. I think [the outcome] is finely balanced now."

A supporter of the BET management, he said he sympathised with the sentiments expressed by M&G. The bid had misrepresented the situation concerning BET. "It has been portrayed as a lame duck company, which would have been accurate some years ago, but is pretty wide of the mark

now." Mr Clark had a coherent strategy and had salvaged quite a bit of shareholder value over the past three years, he said.

Another big institutional shareholder which has not yet made up its mind about the bid agreed that Rentokil had by no means won the day. "It looks quite close. Thompson is a man with a record which looks quite good, but Clark's got a case. It's one of those cases where one has to think quite hard."

BET's shares fell 3p to

202.5p, 10p below the value implied by Rentokil's offer after the bidder's shares also dipped 3p to 352p yesterday.

Analysis said the latest development would strengthen the hand of Mr Clark, who is in the midst of a round of institutional visits. A spokesman said he still had to see about a third of the shareholders.

However, many observers still believed that Rentokil will win the day as institutions continue to bail out of BET.

Takeover fever powers Footsie to fresh record

MARY FAGAN and DIANE COYLE

Takeover fever gripped the London stock market again yesterday, powering share prices to record levels with the FT-SE 100 index climbing 36.4 points to 3,857.1. British Gas registered the biggest advance among the leading shares on rumours that Shell, the Anglo Dutch oil giant, might launch a takeover bid.

City sources also said that George Soros, the international speculator, bought shares in British Gas three weeks ago but that news of his investment has only just emerged.

Shares in British Gas, which is undergoing massive restructuring, jumped 10p to 250.5p - boosting its stock market value by almost £440m to £1.1bn. Neither Shell nor British Gas would comment on the rumour. BP, also viewed as a potential predator, refused to comment.

There were strong rumours that Bids might also be launched for Thorn EMI, the music and

electronics rentals group, and for the Wm Morrison supermarket chain. Thorn is valued at £7.8bn with its shares jumping 33p to £18.13p, and Wm Morrison is worth £1.26m with its shares rising 8p to 171p.

The takeover fever in the market comes on top of new optimism about the economy. Bob Semple, equity strategist at NatWest Markets, said: "This is what happens when the good news starts to flow."

The market will have further opportunities to react to signs of buoyancy with the quarterly survey of manufacturers from the Confederation of British Industry, due on Tuesday, and official retail sales figures on Thursday.

There were more straws in the wind yesterday pointing to the gathering pace of growth. Consumer confidence edged up in April due to a decline in pessimism about the state of the economy. According to the monthly GFK survey carried out for the European Commission, fewer people on balance think the economy is weakening.

There was little change in households' assessment of their own financial situation compared with last month.

Another signal was the weekly sales report from department store and supermarket group John Lewis. Sales were up 20.9 per cent in the latest week, a remarkable jump though inflated by this year's early Easter. Sales of furnishings were particularly strong.

The flow of good news has begun to make an impression on City economists. According to

the Treasury's latest round-up, forecasts have started to revise up their predictions for GDP growth this year. The average of the new forecasts this month is 2.4 per cent, against an average 2.3 per cent in March.

Richard Davidson, a strategist at Morgan Stanley, said: "Estimates of earnings growth will start to go up. The economic gloom has been overdone. The UK is in a very strong underlying position."

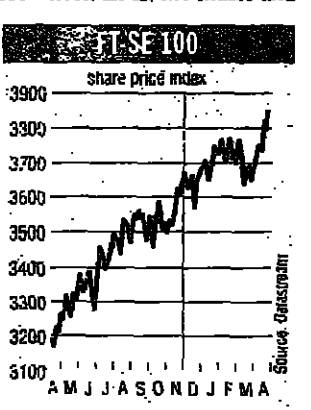
Along with potential bid candidates, consumer and cyclical stocks were strong yesterday. Pharmaceuticals stocks rose thanks to a jump in the shares of drug manufacturers on Wall Street.

The surge in British Gas's share price comes as the company awaits a decision by the regulator, Ofgas, on its future price controls. Clare Spottiswoode, director general of Ofgas, is due within weeks to deliver her initial views on future pricing for millions of domestic customers.

Ms Spottiswoode is also preparing a far-reaching document that will determine what British Gas can charge for use of its pipeline arm by rival suppliers. These charges will in effect dictate British Gas's capacity for delivering dividends to shareholders in the year to come.

If it fails to agree on pricing controls the issue will be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. British Gas has been dogged by controversy over directors' pay and falling service standards.

Market report, page 20



Planet Hollywood shares rocket towards the stars

Planet Hollywood, the trendy restaurant chain, saw its shares rocket by as much as 78 per cent in their first day of trading on Wall Street as investors put their money on a healthy mixture of growth prospects and Tinseltown cachet.

"Entertainment", the concept accorded to the combination of eating and entertainment, was seized on by some analysts as a good bet. "It has the brand name, it has the Hollywood cachet and it has great growth. The stock is hot," said Stefan

Coble, fund manager at Sirach Capital Management in Seattle. "Together with CompuServe, another start-up stock, Planet Hollywood reflected continuing robustness in the market, underpinned by a strong bond climate, as big stock markets reacted to the good earnings news that continues to pour out of corporate America."

Apart from Planet Hollywood, the biggest single group driving the market was high tech shares, powered by better-than-expected earnings from Microsoft Corp, which restored confidence in computer-related companies' ability to keep earnings growing after sentiment had been knocked previously by an earnings growth slowdown warning from IBM.

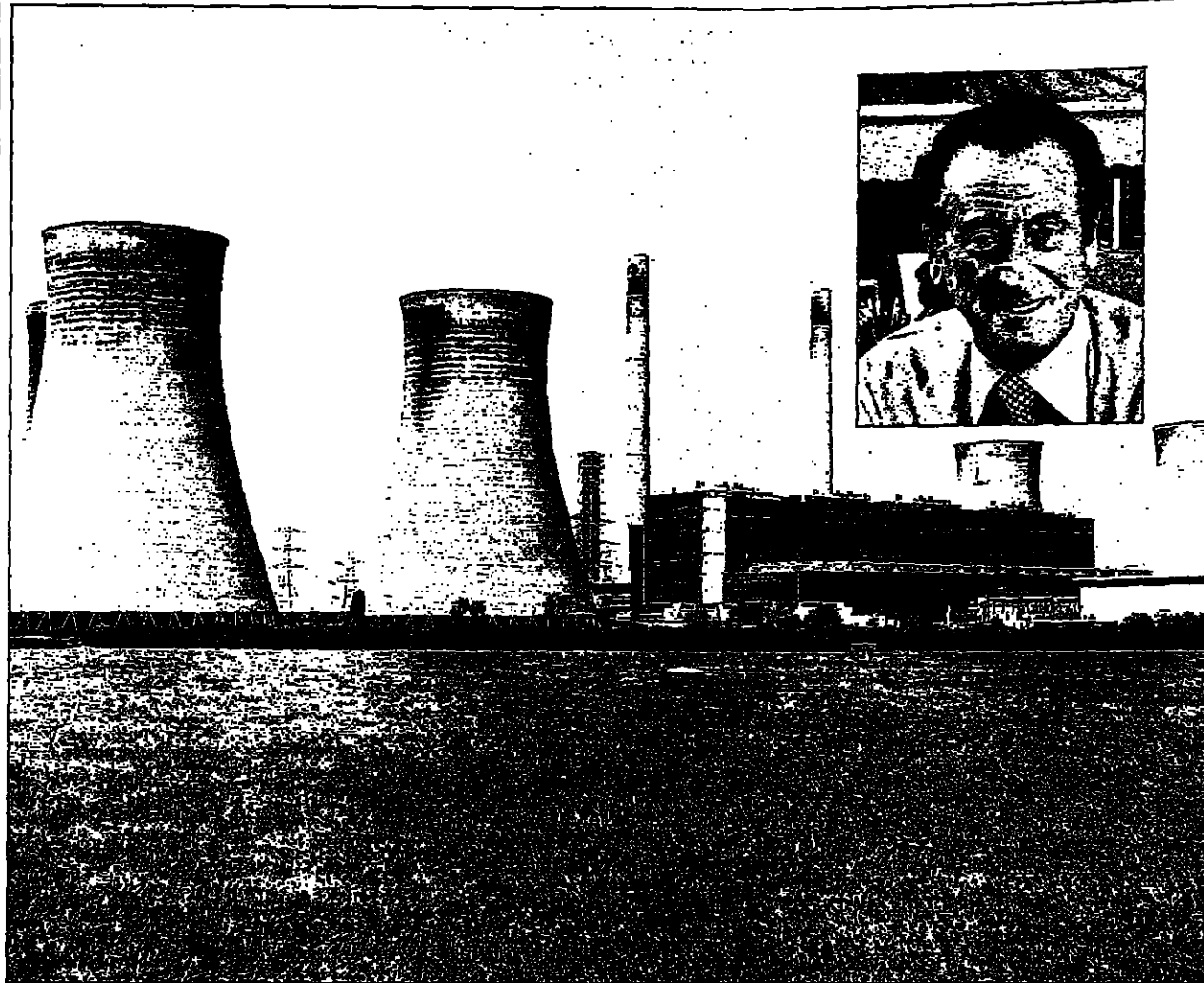
Microsoft rose as much as \$4 to \$113 after reporting third-quarter net earnings of \$562m or 88 cents a share, up 42 per cent from the same quarter a year ago. "The Microsoft earnings were very, very good, and as a result the techs are providing some leadership," said Hugh Johnson, chief investment officer at First Albany Corp.

The Nasdaq Composite index, a barometer of the high technology sector, was up five

points at 1141 in mid-day trading. "It is all earnings today. There is a slight macro story given the strong bond market and the dollar, but the big movers are reacting to earnings," said Phil Roth, chief technical analyst at Dean Whitter.

CompuServe, the on-line service company, benefited from the favourable high tech climate as, after a two hour launch delay, its shares rose as much as 18 per cent in their first day of trading. CompuServe sold 16 million shares at \$30 to raise \$480m.

"It is cheap relative to America Online and that makes it attractive, but this is the kind of stock that could really implode. The Internet is advancing in such a way we cannot see the proprietary advantage of these services," said Neil Hokanson, fund manager at Hokanson Financial Management.



Power bloc: The sale of the three National Power stations, including West Burton (above), will make the group headed by Lord Hanson (inset) the UK's third-largest electricity generator

National set for £1.5bn power sale

MARY FAGAN Industrial Correspondent

National Power is poised to announce the £1.5bn-plus disposal of three big power stations to Eastern Group, now part of the Hanson conglomerate. The announcement comes as National Power braces itself for battle in the face of a widely expected hostile takeover bid by Southern Company of the US.

The deal on the power plants, which would be subject to regulatory approval, would make Hanson the UK's third-largest electricity generator, excluding nuclear. City analysts say the group could overtake PowerGen for the number two slot within a few years.

The disposal, which is expected to take the form of a 10-year leasing arrangement, is being carried out under pressure from the regulator. Professor Stephen Littlechild, Eastern

has already agreed to buy generating plants worth £400m from PowerGen, which had also been told by the watchdog to sell capacity. It is likely that the payments will be split into an initial consideration and further instalments related to output from the stations involved.

The agreement with National Power creates within Hanson, which is headed by Lord Hanson, a substantial vertically integrated electricity group with activities spanning power generation, distribution and supply. It comes as the Government prepares to deliver its verdict on whether the industry is being split into two, with British Energy, the company controlling the most modern reactors, due to be privatised later this year.

The power stations involved account for one-fifth of National Power's UK generating capacity.

But they account for more than 25 per cent of its UK earnings because they run for 60 per cent or 70 per cent of the time while some plants are run only to meet peak demand. The stations include West Burton in Nottinghamshire, Rugeley in Staffordshire and Ironbridge in Shropshire.

National Power will be left with an estimated market share of just over 20 per cent. Analysts say that Hanson's share could be 14 per cent before long, with PowerGen at a projected 16 per cent or 17 per cent. Nuclear is emerging as an increasingly important player although the industry is being split into two, with British Energy, the company controlling the most modern reactors, due to be privatised later this year.

National Power's plans for the disposal of the power stations are thought to have been delayed by its bid for Southern

which, along with PowerGen's acquisition plan, has been under scrutiny by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for several months. Although ministers have yet to announce the verdict on the MMC report, a controversial leak to the Economist magazine appears to have confirmed that the takeovers will be conditionally approved.

In a sharp rebuttal on Thursday to the approach by Southern Company of the US, National Power reaffirmed its commitment to merging with Southern Electric of the UK.

The generator said that there was "no point" in agreeing to talks with the US group, which has not put an offer on the table. Shares in National Power rose by a further 4p yesterday to 592p, compared with an opening price of 492p. Analysts believe that the US predators will bid at least 70p a share, valuing the company at £8bn.

Westpac sinks Lloyds takeover

NIC CICUTTI

The acquisitive moves by Lloyds TSB for the Trust Bank of New Zealand have been sunk by Westpac Banking Corporation of Australia in a shock NZ\$1.27bn (£600m) agreed takeover yesterday.

Westpac's last-minute takeover of Trust Bank, which stunned analysts, will create New Zealand's largest banking group.

The move is a severe setback to the ambitions of Lloyds TSB in that region.

The Lloyds takeover of Trust Bank would itself have created New Zealand's largest bank.

The announcement that it has

been pipped at the post by Westpac may now lead Lloyds to dispose of its assets in New Zealand, some banking analysts said yesterday.

However, the blow may also lead to Lloyds turning its sights firmly back on the UK market and could even lead to a further acquisition in this country, possibly financed by a disposal.

Trust Bank said that under the agreement with Westpac, its shareholders would receive NZ\$2.92 for each of its current shares, or one Westpac share plus cash for every four Trust Bank shares. Trust Bank will also pay a bonus of seven cents a share, worth a total of NZ\$3.31, to shareholders.

Westpac managing director Bob Joss said that some job losses and branch closures within the combined operation were inevitable. The two banks employ 7,000 full-time staff in New Zealand.

Harry Price, head of Westpac's operations in New Zealand, will run the combined bank. He said: "It is inevitable there will be some branch closures, redeployment of staff and some redundancies. There are 100 or more places where we are over the road from each other in terms of banking operations."

But he expected many of the cuts to come out of non-replacement of staff who leave. Attrition alone should be enough, he added.

11th-hour loan for 'Sunday Business'

JOHN EISENHAMMER Financial Editor

A last-minute bridging loan clinched yesterday meant Britain's first business-only Sunday newspaper is expected to be able to launch this weekend. But payment of Sunday Business's 90 staff, which was due last night, has been put off until next week.

The new finance covers this issue's printing and marketing, but it does not remove all problems. Payment will depend on the extent of new backing," a spokesman said.

The launch, which has been dogged by setbacks and already postponed once, was put in jeopardy earlier this week when the project lost its main potential backer. Payment difficulties led to both the main printer, West Ferry Printers, and the advertising agency, ARC Advertising, breaking links with Sunday Business in the past few days.

Frantic efforts by senior executives to find a fresh cash injection to carry through the launch weekend were said to have been rewarded in the early hours of Friday morning when an unnamed group of private individuals put up some money. "It is enough to take us through the first issue, but there are still things to be tied up," said Anil Bhoyra, associate editor and co-founder of the paper along with Tom Rubythorn, editor.

Sunday Business said yesterday it had secured the services of a printer in Derby for the main section of the newspaper.

West Ferry Printers, the joint venture between the Telegraph group and United News & Media, had demanded payment by Wednesday before payment by print 300,000 copies from the planned 580,000 run of the first section. The money was not forthcoming and the contract was cancelled.

Sunday Business said it had rapidly put together a budget television advertisement with an unnamed media agency which it planned to show just before the launch. But a senior editor said last night even this limited campaign might not go ahead.

The original agency working with Sunday Business, ARC Advertising, which has considerable experience in newspaper promotion, said it had pulled the plug earlier this week. "We ceased working for Sunday Business because there is no money to continue the project," said Tim Cotton, business development director at ARC.

Last month, Sunday Business announced it would launch on 21 April and promised a "powerful mix of news, analysis, views and features written for people in business, finance and industry". But the withdrawal of the main potential backer last Tuesday, the Hinduja brothers, who run a Bombay-based international investment business, threw plans into last-minute disarray.

| STOCK MARKETS | | | | | |
|---------------|--------|----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| Dow Jones* | | Nikkei | | Hang Seng | |
| 3567.10 | +36.40 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| FTSE 100 | +36.40 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| FTSE 250 | +40.90 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| FTSE 350 | +18.20 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| FT All Share | +18.14 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| FT Small Cap | +17.61 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| FT All Share | +17.61 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| New York | +6.60 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| Tokyo | +71.34 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |
| Frankfurt | +1.00 | 21883.84 | +71.34 | 10218.49 | -90.80 |

| INTEREST RATES | | | | | |
|-----------------|------|----------------|------|--------------|------|
| Short sterling* | | UK medium gilt | | US long bond | |
| 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 |
| 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 |
| 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 |
| 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 |
| 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

| CURRENCIES | | | | | |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| D/S | | £/DM | | £/¥ | |
| 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.54 |
| 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 |
| 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 |
| 1.48 | 1.48 | 1.48 | 1.48 | 1.48 | 1.48 |
| 1.46 | 1.46 | 1.46 | 1.46 | 1.46 | 1.46 |
| 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.44 | 1.44 |
| 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 |

| OTHER INDICATORS | | | | | |
|------------------|-------|---------|-------|------------|-------|
| Oil Brent \$ | | Gold \$ | | Base Rates | |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |
| 18.59 | +0.19 | 390.60 | -0.60 | 257.36 | -2.14 |

April 20 1996

Don't bet on Labour spoiling the City's party



COMMENT

'If some weakened form of public interest test does reach the statute book, the likeliest effect will be to create a new breed of merger and acquisition specialists'

Buy now while stocks last, is the cry of every City investment banker. With British Gas back at the centre of the takeover rumour mill, the notion that any big or controversial bid must be pushed through before Labour comes to power continues to gain ground in boardrooms and the City. Thus even the most bizarre and incredible of stock market rumours can be made to seem true. For those who make money out of ramping share prices, it has become a convenient rationalisation of otherwise unconvincing rumours.

But would Labour actually call a halt to the takeover free-for-all? Listening to some of the rhetoric, it is easy to believe it would; on the face of it, the stakeholding ideal is incompatible with the wheeler-dealer, casino-like ways of the City. Last summer's economic policy document renewed the party's commitment to investigate whether to shift the burden of proof in takeovers to show they are in the public interest.

The position under present competition law is that a bidder has to demonstrate the converse, that the proposal is not against the public interest. The test used is whether competition is decreased or not. Obviously, a public interest test could work several ways. If the proof of public interest were made rigorous enough by demanding cast-iron evidence that a deal is good for the economy and all 'stakeholders', then merger activity would indeed be brought to a halt.

A softer version of a public interest test

would be to ask a bidder to demonstrate a positive economic benefit from a merger, while continuing in parallel to apply the existing test of whether there is any damage to competition. Under such a system, anti-competitive mergers would continue to be thrown out in the conventional way. The main impact of a public interest test based on economic benefits would probably be to deter marginal deals where cost savings or improvements in service are difficult to prove.

The biggest problem with a public interest test, even a watered down one, is the difficulty of drafting it in a way that will work in practice, once the clever minds of competition lawyers get to grips with it. This explains why so little has been said by Labour to elaborate last summer's statement, though we should know more when the final version appears in June.

It seems unlikely that Labour will drop the public interest test altogether. However, it could well be overshadowed by a reassertion of the importance of competition as a criterion for judging takeovers. This would be consistent with all the tough free-market talk we have been hearing recently from front-bench spokesmen as well as bringing policy into line with Europe. Indeed, at a private meeting with City and industry representatives this week, Peter Mandelson, *eminence grise* to Tony Blair, went so far as to say that with adequate regulation it didn't matter if National Power was acquired by foreigners.

It seems hard to believe that even New Labour would in practice adopt such a Heseltinian approach, but perhaps the takeover industry doesn't have as much to fear from Labour as it believes.

If some weakened form of public interest test does reach the statute book, the likeliest effect will be to create a new breed of mergers and acquisitions specialists skilled at drafting public interest statements that whizz their deals painlessly past the authorities. A continuation of the takeover boom under New Labour is by no means out of the question.

Congratulations in order as G7 meets

Finance ministers from the Group of Seven industrial countries meet in Washington this weekend for one of their regular pow-wows on the world economy. The smoke signals tell us there will be a mood of self-congratulation in the 'wig-wam' this time.

After all, the dollar has done what it was supposed to after last April's G7 decision to reverse its fall against the yen. The Japanese economy has started to recover. Mexico has been thoroughly sorted out. The Russians have toed the line on economic policy to get their \$10bn loan from the IMF. Germany was starting to look worrying but the Bundesbank took decisive action in time for

the G7 meeting. With so little to discuss, finance ministers are actually going to be able to find time to think about helping the world's poor, pushing forward with plans for debt relief.

It is an old truism, however, that if everything appears to be going well, there must be a disaster looming. There are several potential candidates.

One is the oil price. The standard argument about its recent rise to five-year highs is that this is the short-lived result of a harsh winter. However, it is easy to imagine a combination of circumstances - Middle East war, strong Asian demand, a colder than normal summer in the northern hemisphere, a pipeline catastrophe in Russia - that would send the oil price soaring.

Even without an oil shock there are some nascent inflationary dangers. The US economy seems to be gaining strength rapidly after its pause, and the UK could follow. Food price inflation has already risen, and consumer goods prices show signs of following suit. In Britain the housing market is picking up and credit growth is rapid.

On the other hand, there is a risk of recession in Germany, whose economic problems might be too deep-seated for this week's interest rate cut to have much impact. Tackling over-regulation and high labour costs would make it vulnerable to the sort of slump Britain experienced in the early 1980s.

Still, perhaps finance ministers should be

allowed to pat themselves on the back for the past year's successes. They are rare enough in economic management.

Why Southern bid is likely to be cleared

Southern Company of the US must have been relieved to hear that Nigel Hawkins, Yamaichi's likeable and much quoted utilities analyst, thinks Southern's bid for National Power is 'a bridge too far' and will as a consequence end up before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. There is nothing wrong with Mr Hawkins' logic, but his forecasting record in this area suggests the exact opposite is likely to occur. When Trafalgar House started the takeover scramble for Britain's electricity companies with a bid for Northern Electric, Mr Hawkins thought it certain to be referred. It was not. He believed Scottish Power's bid for Manweb would go to the MMC on the grounds it involved integration of a generator with a distributor. It did not. Mr Hawkins sealed his reputation as a thoroughly reliable contrary indicator of mergers policy by then predicting that National Power's bid for Southern Electric of the UK, and PowerGen's bid for Midlands, would be cleared. Not a bad guess but, lamentably, wrong again. They were referred. All of which presumably means that the American bid for National Power will be cleared. It's a funny old world.

Queens Moat to sell off 25 hotels

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Queens Moat Houses, the heavily indebted hotels group, has put a portfolio of 25 UK hotels on the market which analysts say could fetch between £60m and £100m. The stock market welcomed the announcement and the shares added 2p to 31p yesterday. But the proceeds will still only be a drop in the ocean compared with borrowings which the group revealed last month were still a mammoth £1bn at the end of December.

Andrew Coppel, chief executive, said the portfolio being disposed of comprises 19 hotels branded under the County name and six Moat Houses. Deutsche Morgan Grenfell and Christie & Co have been appointed to handle the sale.

Queens Moat has been steadily running down its interest in country-house-type hotels which do not fit into its core Moat House brand, situated on the edge of towns or on

main routes or both. Last year, the group put 16 of its County hotels on the market and sold eight. It has sold a further three since December, including last month's sale of the Europa, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which was sold to Stakis for £3.4m in March at the time of its results. The group said then that a further 27 hotels were earmarked for disposal.

Analysts pointed to the similarities between Queens Moats' County hotels and the White Hart chain recently sold by Forte to Regal Hotels. Forte, now owned by Granada since its successful takeover bid, received £122m for White Hart. The County hotels are viewed as better quality, with estimates for their value ranging from between £50m and £60m to as much as £100m.

It is understood that the group is hoping to find a single buyer for the whole portfolio, but has not had any indications of interest as yet. There are no plans to sell any more of the

Moat House chain after completion of the latest disposal, which will leave the group with 52 hotels largely under the brand name in the UK. The group continues to own a substantial portfolio in the rest of Europe.

News of the latest plans comes hot on the heels of results showing that pre-tax profits of £42.4m last year replaced losses of £95.2m in 1994. The figures would have been much worse but for £48.8m of interest waived under last year's £1.3bn capital restructuring, which cut borrowings that stood at £1.28bn at the end of 1994.

Stanley Metcalfe, chairman, reported 'satisfactory' trading in the opening months of the new financial year. While he was cautiously optimistic about the UK, prospects for growth in Germany and France were not good, he said.

Despite the huge problems still facing the group, the shares have soared since being relisted at 3p last May following a two-year suspension.



Andrew Coppel: Faced with a mountain of borrowings despite latest disposals

Yorkshire Bank to axe 300 jobs in Leeds

NIC CICUTTI

Yorkshire Bank, one of the UK's top regional banks, is axing 300 jobs at its head office in Leeds. The job cuts, announced yesterday, follow a review which the bank claimed was aimed at keeping its business competitive.

The bank said it would aim to achieve the cutback by redeployment, voluntary severance and normal staff turnover. However, compulsory redundancies were not ruled out.

The move was bitterly attacked yesterday by Keith Brookes, assistant secretary at Bifu, the banking union. He said: 'These are the biggest job cuts we have ever faced in the Yorkshire Bank and our fear is

that this is just the beginning. Staff are being forced to pay the price for a relentless drive to give even bigger bonuses to shareholders.'

Yorkshire Bank's chief executive, Tom Gallagher, said the cuts followed developments in information technology at the Leeds office, where 1,550 people work.

'Our review of the head office structure will enable the bank to maintain its position as a competitive financial services player in what is an increasingly fast-moving market,' he said.

He will be held with staff over the next few weeks about the job losses, which add to the 100,000 jobs axed from the banking industry over the last five years.

German confidence plummets

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

Business confidence in Germany has dipped to its lowest level for more than two years during the past month, underlining the fragile state of the German economy.

The gloomy results of the widely-followed Ifo economic research institute's business survey were seen as further vindication of the Bundesbank's surprise cut in interest rates on Thursday.

Michael Claus, an economist at investment bank CSFB, said: 'Interest rates will have to stay very low for the foreseeable future. There must be no risk that they will go up.'

The Bundesbank's action, ahead of Sunday's meeting of

G7 finance ministers in Washington, makes plain its concern about the state of the economy. It hopes the half-point reduction in the discount rate to 2.5 per cent, matching its all-time low, will help both by lowering long-term interest rates and bringing down the mark's value against the dollar and sterling.

The central bank has engineered the right conditions for these results by signalling that it will reduce the repo rate, its key money market interest rate, during the coming weeks. It was left unchanged on Thursday.

The pound jumped more than half a pence for the second day running yesterday, climbing to its highest level for six months. Sterling rose to DM2.2858 from the previous close of DM2.2796.

Despite the clear signs of slowdown during the past few months, economists were surprised by the scale of the decline in business sentiment last month. The Ifo index for West Germany fell for the fourth month, from 91.8 to 90.4, the lowest since December 1993. The index for East Germany fell from 102.4 to 100.5.

'It is surprising to see confidence falling in spite of better retail conditions and the monetary easing we have seen,' said Julian Callow of Kleinwort Benson. He said it was a signal of the depth of the problems facing German industry.

On top of structural problems such as high labour costs, businesses have been suffering from the strength of the mark last year and weakness in Ger-

many's main export markets. Mr Claus of CSFB said: 'There is a lot of disappointment that supports have not yet picked up after the Deutschmark weakening we have seen so far.'

The trade-weighted index for the currency has fallen just over 5 per cent from its early 1995 peak, but export growth has slowed, and orders have slumped this year.

The dismal export picture has been reflected in the broader measures of the economy. The most recent figures show industrial output 4.8 per cent lower in February than a year earlier, and manufacturing orders 4.9 per cent down on the year.

However, most economists still agree with the official assessment that growth will start to pick up again later this year.

Costs leave nursing homes looking sickly

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

This is a crucial time of year for the UK's growing private nursing home sector. Most of the elderly occupants of its homes depend, wholly or partly, on funding from the state or local authorities, whose financial year has just begun. But since the Government started handing responsibility for financing to cash-strapped local authorities in 1993, nursing home operators have faced a squeeze on their main source of financing and confusion over its timing. Occupancy levels have been hit accordingly. 'Ikare, the second-biggest operator in the sector, reported last month that average levels had fallen 2 percentage points in 1995, ending the year at 94 per cent.

The group warned that its own levels would fall again in 1996, a problem that is likely to be common to the industry, as local authority budgets are again squeezed by central government. Laing & Buisson, a specialist consultancy, estimates that cuts in funding put at £120m this year could spell between 10,000 and 12,000 fewer places. If that lands disproportionately on the private sector, as expected, that could spell a reduction of around 5 per cent. Meanwhile, the rate being paid to nursing homes for residents still covered by DSS payments has been increased by a meagre 2.7 per cent this year.

And while sales growth is being constrained, care homes are facing a pincer movement on costs. Nurses' pay for instance, which rose nearly 7 per cent last year at Westminster Health Care, the biggest operator, is rising well ahead

of income. The industry is also being forced to start depreciating property and adopt more conservative practices in accounting for start-up costs. These technical considerations, have a serious impact on profits for a sector expanding at 15-20 per cent a year.

A much bigger unknown is what impact national politics will have on the sector. Difficulties faced by the Government in financing tax cuts in this

year's Budget could spell tighter limits on local authorities' budgets, while it is not yet clear what Labour's attitude to private nursing homes will be.

With all this negative sentiment, it is easy to see why shares in the private sector have underperformed the rest of the stock market. But as our table shows, many stocks are trading at substantial discounts to net asset value derived from discounted cash flow

calculations by Merrill Lynch. Two of the better companies are looking more fully valued. Westminster Health Care has a credible strategy of diversification away from nursing homes to so-called 'higher dependency' units for patients who need more nursing care and where funding is more secure. Quality Care Homes is also well run and has a low cost base, but a high proportion of state-financed residents and could be hit by a minimum wage.

Goldsborough and CrestaCare are looking relatively attractive as recovery plays, but these are only for the brave. External factors, combined with industry rationalisation, are likely to mean that the sector will remain under a cloud for a while yet.

Promising signs for Millennium

The flotation of hotels group Millennium and Copthorne is already looking promising ahead of its stock market debut next week. Institutional demand is strong and the company is raising more capital than originally forecast - £180m, or £175m net of expenses - instead of £150m.

The pricing is also at the top end of expectations at 278p which values the company at £402m.

The higher funding means that CDL hotels, the listed hotels arm of a Singapore group, will see its shareholding diluted to 55 per cent. The notional net dividend is 4.7p.

Analysts are expecting the shares to go to a healthy premium when they start trading on Thursday due to favourable trends in the UK and US hotels market and the group's strong portfolio of 22 four-star business hotels in London, New York and Paris, as well as regional centres in the UK, France and Germany.

Occupancy levels are healthy and stand at 85 per cent in the London and 72.5 per cent in New York. The UK regional hotels and those in France and Germany have seen occupancy levels increase on last year and current trading is encouraging.

Millennium plans to use the £180m raised from the float to pay off a £50m loan from Singapore with the rest being used to reduce debts. Gearing will fall to 31 per cent as a result, leaving the company free to pursue acquisitions, particularly in the US, Canada and in Europe. An Edinburgh hotel and another in London are also possible.

Analysts are forecasting earnings growth of 20 per cent this year which puts the shares on a forward rating of 15. With 1996 predicted to be another strong year for the hotel industry, the shares are worth a look.

IN BRIEF

• AIM, the Stock Exchange's Alternative Investment Market for small companies, has exceeded its initial target of attracting 140 businesses within its first year, nearly two months ahead of schedule. Launched in June 1993, it has seen over two billion shares traded within the first 10 months, equating to about £700m. Over £243m of new equity capital has been raised by AIM companies.

• John Watts, Minister for Railways and Roads, announced the sale of the 10th British Rail infrastructure service company. South West Infrastructure Maintenance (Swim) has been bought by Amec, the international construction group. Swim provides infrastructure engineering services, primarily for the triangular area between London, Exeter and Hastings. Its work covers civil plant, electrification and signals engineering and telecommunications.

• Banque Paribas has agreed to sell its £340m UK mortgage portfolio to Halifax Building Society unit Halifax Loans Group for an undisclosed sum. The move will allow Banque Paribas to leave the UK residential mortgage market and concentrate on its specialist financial services activities.

• Newcastle Building Society intends to remain a 'strong, independent mutual organisation'. At the society's annual meeting Tony Glenton, chairman, said: 'We have considered what we believe to be the best interests of the members as a whole. We are of a firm view that the strong regional mutual building society best satisfies these obligations. As a consequence, it is your board's intention to continue that policy and to demonstrate the competitive advantage of mutuality.'

• GKN has recruited Chung Kong Chow from BOC Gases to succeed David Lees as chief executive from next January. Danny Rosenkranz, chief executive of BOC Group, will take over the running of BOC Gases, by far the company's largest industrial gases division, which generates 70 per cent of total group sales.

• BT, Vodafone and Mercury Communications are among seven companies that have applied for licences for new wide-area paging services in the UK and other European countries, said Ian Taylor, Science and Technology Minister. Applications were also received from Hutchison Telecom, London Pager Company, Paging Network (UK) and Message Telecommunications.

| COMPANY RESULTS | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| | Turnover £ | Pre-tax £ | EPS | Dividend |
| Accommodates (F) | 3.75m (1.8m) | -8.8m (-2.7m) | -21.35p (-6.45p) | nil (nil) |
| Charles Williams (F) | 6.95m (5.27m) | 1.51m (1.21m) | 0.82p (0.68p) | 0.27p (0.25p) |
| Creston Land (F) | 2.1m (2.88m) | 0.13m (-0.05m) | 0.18p (-0.07p) | nil (nil) |
| Wilson Group (F) | 1.07m (0.81m) | -0.50m (-0.54m) | -2.85p (-3.55p) | nil (nil) |
| Williams Jack (F) | 87.9m (74.6m) | 0.62m (0.80m) | 2.59p (4.4p) | 1.75p (nil) |
| (F) - Final (I) - Interim | | | | |

Get the Independent on Sunday tomorrow for 50p and read:

Pornography and the British

Are we all unshockable now?



Starting this Sunday in Real Life, part one of a two-part special report on pornography

Blake Morrison on The Shrug Factor
Carry on Pornographing - what titillates the British?
Inside Stories: a day on a porn magazine
Jobs for the girls: women in porn

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a dense, dark forest or wooded area, possibly a mountain slope, with a lighter, rocky or cleared area visible at the bottom.

Mr Richards is said to disagree with Mr Woodhead's view that primary schools use too many trendy teaching methods and appears to believe that

A spokesman for the standards office strongly denied the accusations. "We refute everything [Mr Richards] says. It is nonsense. We have always denied the charge of political motivation . . . We should be doing a disservice to parents if we were to brush this kind of thing under the carpet and pretend everything was alright."

DEPENDENT

In the 27 years since the
Bafta awards have been tele-

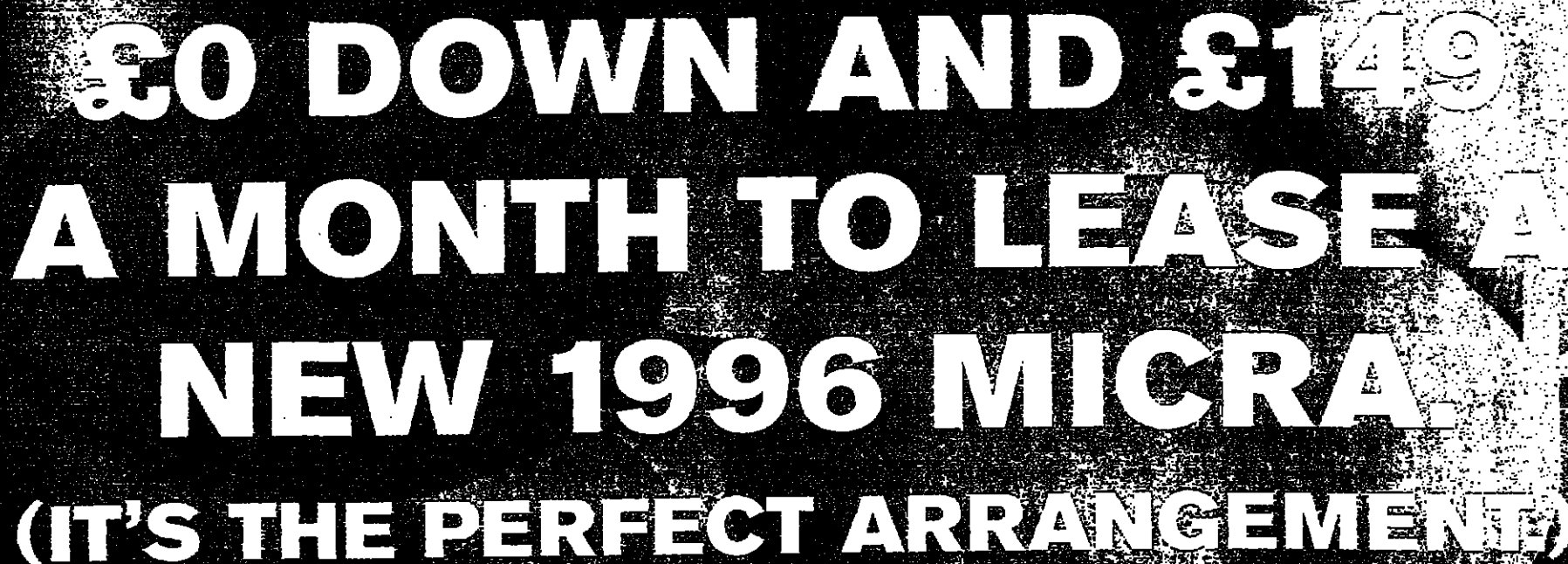


The Fussell empire began in 1744 when they founded 100-

"It is one of those things. Although Ida's name was Fussell, she had only marital connections with the family and we saw her rarely," Mrs. Wheeler said.



Dean Madden, a scientist at the National Centre for Bio-technology Education, said: "The beer is brewed in exactly the same way as normal ales and it is only the yeast which has been tinkered with. As a result you have a high-strength lager which tastes just like other products but is less likely to leave drinkers with the dreaded beer belly."



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MIDDLE EAST IN TURMOIL

Israel 'regrets' but civilians still get shelled

ROBERT FISK
Riviera

The sea was calm and out in the tranquil bay, the Israeli missile boats rode the full tide. Just a puff of smoke from their decks showed that it was business as usual. On my car radio, Uri Dromi, the Israeli government spokesman, was telling us of his regret for the massacre at Qana and of Israel's enormous respect for civilian life. The shells hit just to the east of the coastal highway, sending a shower of earth and rocks into the air. They were back at the usual job of firing at the traffic between Beirut and Sidon. 26 artillery rounds in just 30 minutes.

What would Mr Dromi inhale? I wondered, as the gunboats fired away? They were trying to cut Lebanon in half, persuade the thousands of refugees and the army to leave the road between Lebanon and

largest cities to go home, to break the highway passage between Beirut and southern Lebanon. Of course, the Lebanese went on driving the road. And we all know what the Israelis would say if they were hit. Had they not been warned not to go to Sidon?

Down in Qana, the wickedness of Thursday's massacre has still to be absorbed by the dazed UN Fijian soldiers who spent 12 hours dragging the torn corpses of 105 civilians out of their compound after Israeli shells cut them to pieces.

But of double standards, they knew all too much. "If this had happened in Israel - if the Lebanese army killed a hundred Israelis in a shelter and then said sorry and asked for a ceasefire - can you imagine what would happen?" a European UN soldier asked. "It would be World War Three and President Clinton would be denouncing an act

of barbarous terrorism." True, Mr Clinton did bring himself to refer yesterday to the "terrible events" which had occurred in Lebanon, although he did not find the courage to add the words "caused by Israel", which would have angered America's Jewish community but which might have softened the growing fury of the West expressed here by Muslim and Christian Lebanese. For it has not been lost on the people of southern Lebanon - not on UN troops - that Washington prevented the UN from condemning Israel for attacking a UN compound.

The refugee massacre - or "event" as Mr Clinton prefers to call it - will be remembered in Qana today when many of the 105 dead will be given a mass burial in the village. Yesterday General Stanislaw Wozniak, the UN's Polish commander in Lebanon, spoke with both emotion and bitterness of the Israeli



Victims: A man sits in the ruins of a relative's house in Nabatea which had been sheltering a family of 11

attack on his refugee-packed battalion headquarters. "I can't find words to describe what I feel after seeing this," he said. "Why civilians? Simply, you don't attack civilians. You don't attack UN positions."

He had, he said, held a "gen-

eral-to-general" discussion with his Israeli opposite number, General Amnon Shahak, and expressed the view that no such attack must ever recur, a somewhat mild dressing-down for General Shahak, given the scale of the slaughter. It might have

been expected that the Israeli air force would have respected the peace of Qana yesterday but even as General Wozniak was visiting his smashed compound, two Israeli jets flew low over the village and broke the sound barrier with a shattering explosion.

Katyusha missiles were fired at the Israeli 350 yards from the UN base. One man described how a dead woman, who bled over his body during the 20-minute attack, saved his life when her body absorbed the shards of metal from later shells. Blood still lay congealed on the steps of the base, along with pieces of human remains.

What has so infuriated the Lebanese, however, is not just the double standards of Mr Clinton but the West's apparent acceptance that the massacre was a mistake - as if the rest of Israel's latest military adventure in Lebanon was a moral war of "surgical strikes" and "precision bombing". Surgical it may have been - and all too precise - but the targets have been almost entirely civilian. How else can one account for the fact that more than 200 civilians have been killed - but a maximum of only seven Hizbollah guerrillas?

If Qana was a mistake, the Lebanese ask, what about the Israeli missile attack on a home in Nabatea a few hours earlier in which a family died, the youngest a four-day-old baby? Or the three children and two women slaughtered in the ambulance on Saturday. Or the two-year-old girl decapitated by a missile in Beirut on Monday. Or the three sisters cut down by Israeli shells a week ago. Or the 27-year-old woman whose car was hit by an Israeli missile a day earlier. Were these all mistakes? Or were they surgical precision?

Letters, page 16

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Israelis launched 'hasty' attack

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

How the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) managed to hit a clearly marked United Nations base, killing 101 Lebanese refugees sheltering there, while allegedly aiming at rocket launchers hidden 300 metres away remained unclear last night. But intelligence sources now believe the Israelis responded too hastily to the launch of Hizbollah rockets before checking whether there was a sensitive installation nearby.

The conduct and procedures of the Israeli forces make it questionable whether they have been trying to excise Hizbollah rocket launchers with high-precision attacks. Doubts have also been raised about the IDF's much-vaunted professionalism.

The Israeli conduct of their air and artillery attacks has been in marked contrast to those by Nato on Bosnian Serb positions in September last year. In Bosnia, Nato and the UN drew up lists of potential targets, most of which were discarded because they were too close to civilian areas. When the Serbs fired into Sarajevo, Nato responded with accurate attacks that received worldwide support.

If the Israelis hoped for the same when they responded to artillery and rocket attacks from

Lebanon, they were mistaken. Certainly, the Israelis' apparent inaccuracy remains almost incomprehensible.

The Israelis use the US Firefinder radar system, which plots the launch site and path of artillery shells, mortars or rockets, and can pinpoint the launch site to within 10 metres. The site coordinates are then entered into the computer at the fire direction centre. The position of the individual guns is known from a global positioning system. The computer will also take account of air density, temperature and wind speed and direction. The first salvo should, therefore, land precisely on the target - certainly not 300 metres away, as appears to have happened on Thursday.

A Western army trying to carry out "surgical" attacks on elusive targets such as the Hizbollah rocket launchers would have sensitive sites - villages and UN bases - marked and surrounded by a designated safety area which would make it impossible to fire on them without due reflection. The Israelis clearly did not have such safeguards in place.

But even if they did fire too hastily, the chances of inaccurate rounds landing on a UN base nearby seem slim, and questions remain about what really happened.

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sport

Collymore finds hidden depths

Glenn Moore hears the most expensive player in Britain make a persuasive case for inclusion in the England team to meet Croatia at Wembley next week

There is a belief, held by some in the professional game, that Stan Collymore goes missing when it matters. They point to his anonymous debut for England last summer, and to his tell-tale, impotent display at the City Ground last month, when the taunts of his former supporters at Nottingham Forest seemed to get to him.

It is not a belief shared by Collymore. "Nobody at Liverpool or Nottingham Forest has ever thrown that at me so I am not going to comment on that," he said after training with England at Bisham Abbey yesterday.

An understandable reaction, but that very unwillingness to comment suggested a raw nerve. Collymore is an articulate man and that was the only subject he was not happy to expand upon yesterday. His mere presence, in Bisham Abbey's Warwick Room, displayed a measure of self-assurance. Relations between the squad and the media are currently strained. This follows exaggerated headlines attached to Les Ferdinand's comments on the signing of Faustino Asprilla before the last international. Some players are no longer prepared to talk - Sol Campbell yesterday refused to be interviewed, having apparently been advised not to by a senior team-mate.

Collymore could easily have followed suit. After all, he was disciplined by Liverpool earlier this season after criticising their handling of him in a magazine interview. Yet, there he was, surrounded by tape recorders and notebooks, playing with fire again.

And why not? This, after all, is a man with a sense of perspective. As he said himself, he has had "a few ups and downs" in his career. As a YTS boy at Walsall, he was left out of place even hypnotherapy could not prevent his walking out on the club. Later, after rejection by Wolves and recovery at Stafford Rangers, he found himself the butt of dressing room humour at Crystal Palace.

He left to join Southampton for £100,000. "It was probably the best move I ever made," he said yesterday. The rest is history -

the £2.5m move to Nottingham Forest, the England cap, the British record £8.5m transfer to Liverpool.

A glorious rise. Not quite. By the time he left Forest, his team-mates refused to congratulate him when he scored; soon after he joined Liverpool he was in the reserves wondering publicly why they bought him.

Having been signed as a goalscoring centre-forward, he thought that was where he was going to play. But Liverpool already had Robbie Fowler.

"The gaffer [Roy Evans] did not want me and Robbie pushing up against two centre-halves and it was noticeable that we were making similar runs early on in the season," he said. "I scored the first goal of the season and people said 'he's doing well', but I knew I

'It's important to get another chance. I want to go on and do well for my country'

was not getting as involved in games as last season. When I got back in the side I had to decide where I could be most effective and justify my place.

"I'm now playing as well as I've ever done but in a different way. It's a different role to the one I had at Forest, almost the opposite to the partnership I had with Brian Roy. Brian used to drop deeper and I would push on to the last man. Although I would like to have scored a few more goals this season, the actual creating play has come on tenfold. I'm coming a bit deeper, going wider, getting more crosses in."

On Tuesday Fowler converted one of those crosses to earn Liverpool a late draw against Everton and Collymore added: "I enjoyed that. It's not the same as scoring but it's almost as good."

"I am more aware, more

thoughtful when playing. Teams often come to Anfield and defend deep. You have to do something a bit different. In the Everton game we were getting hassled and harried in the first half so in the second half I dropped a bit deeper to try and cause them problems. I think it worked."

"I'm now better equipped to play at international level than before. People have compared my game to Teddy Sheringham's but I do not compare myself with anybody. I think I can play both forward roles. I have always felt I could play at this level."

Yet, when he got the chance last summer, he failed. "I was disappointed with the Japan game. It was not so much nerves as being in awe of the place. It was my first game at Wembley, my England debut. But going to a club like Liverpool means you are playing in a lot of high-profile games so I think I will do better next time."

"It's important to get another chance. I want to go on and do well for my country. After that game, people said: 'Can he do this? Can he do that?' I do not think you should judge anybody on one game. A lot of the media in the Liverpool area described me as a flop earlier in the season, now suddenly I am a multi-talented attacker. I do not take much notice of either."

He was also criticised for staying in Cannock, his hometown, rather than moving to Liverpool. In the event it has probably helped. Being away from football-obsessed Merseyside and among familiar faces made the early-season struggles easier to deal with.

"I get this question a lot - 'Why do I live there? Why not move up to Liverpool?' It is where I am happiest. It is an hour's drive and it doesn't seem to have affected my form yet. It is where I was born, my family and friends are there and they are very important. However I have played - good, bad or indifferent - I can go back and be treated normally."

Collymore, who incidentally believes Newcastle will win the title on goal-difference, also believes his slow start has



Stan Collymore faces his 'other half', Robbie Fowler, in training yesterday

Photograph: Peter Jay

helped him deal with the pressures. "I have seen a few non-League clubs. I do not envy some of the younger lads at a big club who are under pressure from day one to do it."

One of those is Fowler, who does not seem to have had many problems so far. But, warned Collymore: "I just hope he is allowed to progress naturally and not have too much pressure put on his back. He is still a young lad and it is when he gets to his mid-twenties, and there is a lot of expectation on him, that it might build up."

The pair may play together against Croatia on Wednesday. "Obviously they are one of the combinations you feel would do well," Terry Venables said. "They are very good together."

"It would help me," Collymore said, "but I don't think it makes any difference to Robbie who he plays with. He is an amazing player."

Collymore is no slouch himself. "He is capable of doing the role Teddy does," Venables said. "Against Japan I tried to get him to come out deeper and use the wider areas. He did not do it on the day but his

game has progressed that way. It takes a while to settle in. He was a huge fee and there was a lot of expectation."

But, can he handle playing for England? His two goals against Newcastle suggests he can perform on the big occasion. Then again, he is quiet in the FA Cup semi-final. Everyone who has worked with him makes the point that he needs to be loved, he wants to be appreciated. It is one reason why he prospered under Barry Fry - ever a man to build up his players - but was discontented under Frank Clark.

It may also explain his reluctance to leave Cannock.

With his undeniable talent, and his ability to learn, Collymore has the potential to establish himself in the international arena. But while Fowler, as Venables said, "looks as if he could come in and do something immediately", Collymore, whose game is less instinctive, more cerebral, may need a run of games before he feels comfortable enough to blossom. There may not be enough time for that before Euro '96 but, at 24, Collymore is young enough to wait.

We want it all and we want it now

FAN'S EYE VIEW

No 146

Everton

HUGO KONDRATUK

A couple of years ago, one of the footy mags ran an article, jolly imagining what the letters of football clubs' names might stand for. All the obvious big-name teams were there, of course. "Transformed Region And May Now Effectively Replace Everton."

If things at Goodison have been ever so slightly disappointing this season, you only have to remember how recently that sort of Emlyn-scale nonsense was being muttered to realize how bad things were, and how much better they have become under Big Joe.

But, us Everton fans, we don't want much. Just everything, at home and abroad, three years running, playing football that has the Ajax coaching staff weeping into their Heinekens with envy. Until we get that, we'll never really be happy.

So what are we complaining about at the moment? The transfer record, for a start. Last summer, having won the Cup, hopes could not have been higher. Season ticket sales had trebled in two years. The fans were ready to pack Goodison every week. And chairman Peter Johnson, it was widely reported, had given Royle £15m to put the world's best in a blue shirt.

Then the Kanchelskis affair threw a bucket of cold Mancunian water over everything. While other big clubs were parading exotic new superstars every week, blue blood slowly turned to ice at the thought that we might end up with nobody. It was all sorted out, of course, but too late to affect our nervous start in the Premiership and dismal, short-lived effort in Europe.

Meanwhile, it became clear the £15m included the fee, ready spent on Funkin' Duncan (usually unavailable but good) and Earl Barrett (always unavailable and no good). In other words, after Andrei and Endzheg League big-lad-at-the-back Craig Short, there was actually no money. So with the team half-built, that was the end of the transfer trail.

For a while things looked gloomy. In darker moments, it was hard not to look across the park and wonder how two Evertonians, Fowler and McMahon, had been plucked from our very bosom to lead a red-nose renaissance. While Liverpool had looked round the corner for a young Blue who could score goals with his eyes shut, we had preferred to go to Belgium to spend £3m on a Nigerian who, skilful and likeable though he was, was sometimes played whole games like that.

Now, after a good run, the outlook is a lot more cheerful. Kanchelskis is a joy, while a fit (for a while) Ferguson is easily the most terrifying Scottish mourner English defences have faced since Mel Gibson. Perhaps even more welcome is the home-produced talent arriving in the team. Grant is easing in. O'Connor has looked good, and waiting to explode in a year or two is the 17-year-old Michael Branch, the "Electric Blue", a striker said to make Fowler look like Brett Angell.

So, all Joe has to do now is use some of his new Unibro money to kit us out with the men we need. Who? Well, if we were manager I know what I'd do. I'd call Alan Ball, tell him how a small boy I asked God to bless him every night for five-and-a-bit years, and then ask him to sell me Georgi Kinkadze for any money he likes.

Joe probably has other plans. But he knows the kind of players Goodison adores, and those it doesn't. So Royle will make the right moves, you can be sure. If he does, next season could be vintage - and the true meaning of Everton may be revealed at last. "Entertainment Vehicle Extraordinary, Roaring Towards Our Nirvana. Didn't you know?"

Sunderland ready to board the Premiership

Phil Shaw on the best of the action this weekend in the Endsleigh League

As Manchester City take an enforced break from the scramble to avoid relegation, the paths of two talents that were dubiously deemed surplus to their requirements cross in one of the First Division's key confrontations.

For weeks, City supporters have been bracing themselves for the bitter-sweet irony of Peter Reid - sacked as manager by Peter Swales two and a half years ago despite twice taking them to fifth place among the elite - leading Sunderland into the Premiership in place of their own club.

The first half of the equation will come to fruition today, with Sunderland kicking a ball, if third-placed Crystal Palace do not win at Wolverhampton. Whatever happens there, Reid's side can clinch promotion at Roker Park tomorrow simply by taking a point from Stoke.

The presence of a second Maine Road "reject" cannot ensure that there is nothing simple about it. Mike Sheron's finishing prowess made him an England Under-21 cap under Reid's tutelage and City's top scorer for Brian Horton until the advent of Uwe Rosler. A £1m move to Norwich did not

| THE BATTLE FOR PROMOTION | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|--|-----------------------------|--------------|----|----|----|--------------------|-----|----|----|
| The last five games | | | How they stand this morning | | | | | Remaining fixtures | | | |
| Points out of possible 15 | | | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts | | |
| Birmingham (H) W 3-0; Sheffield U (H) D 0-0; Charlton (H) D 0-0; Barnsley (A) W 1-0; Watford (A) D 3-3 | 9/15 | | 1 | Sunderland | 43 | 22 | 15 | 6 | 59 | 31 | 81 |
| Charlton (A) D 0-0; Tranmere (H) W 6-2; Oldham (A) W 1-0; Ipswich (A) L 1-3; Stoke (H) W 3-1 | 15/15 | | 2 | Derby | 43 | 20 | 15 | 8 | 66 | 46 | 75 |
| Southend (H) W 2-0; Reading (A) W 2-0; Leicester (H) L 1-0; Port Vale (H) D 2-2; Millwall (A) W 4-1 | 10/15 | | 3 | C Palace | 43 | 19 | 15 | 9 | 64 | 45 | 72 |
| Charlton (H) L 1-0; Portsmouth (H) W 2-1; Luton (A) W 2-1; Grimsby (H) L 2-1; Wolves (H) W 2-0 | 9/15 | | 4 | Stoke | 42 | 18 | 12 | 12 | 56 | 45 | 66 |
| Stoke (A) L 1-0; Derby (H) D 0-0; Sunderland (A) D 0-0; Luton (H) D 1-1; Leicester (H) L 1-0 | 3/15 | | 5 | Charlton | 42 | 16 | 17 | 9 | 53 | 43 | 65 |
| Tranmere (A) L 5-2; Norwich (H) W 2-1; Grimsby (A) L 3-1; Reading (H) L 2-1; Derby (H) W 1-0 | 6/15 | | 6 | Ipswich | 42 | 17 | 11 | 14 | 75 | 66 | 62 |
| Oldham (H) W 2-0; Tranmere (A) D 1-1; West Brom (H) L 3-2; Palace (A) W 1-0; Charlton (A) W 1-0 | 10/15 | | 7 | Leicester | 43 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 60 | 59 | 62 |
| Millwall (H) W 3-0; Norwich (A) L 2-0; Southend (H) W 3-1; Reading (H) W 3-1; Sunderland (A) L 3-2 | 9/15 | | 8 | Huddersfield | 42 | 17 | 11 | 14 | 59 | 53 | 62 |
| Sunderland (A) L 3-0; Luton (H) W 4-0; Millwall (A) L 2-0; Port Vale (H) W 3-1; Portsmouth (H) W 2-0 | 9/15 | | 9 | Birmingham | 43 | 15 | 12 | 16 | 59 | 58 | 57 |

work out, but Sheron's 13 goals in 19 starts for Stoke suggests Lou Macari got the better of the exchange deal for Keith Scott. Sheron forms half of a highly mobile Endsleigh SAS with Simon Sturridge. His stunning winner in the midweek six-pointer with Charlton, which lifted Stoke to fourth, made him the first Porters' player ever to score in seven consecutive games. Sunderland, however, have been busy on the club-record front themselves.

A total of 24 clean sheets is

two better than their previous best, and if they remain unbeaten for a 17th League match it will represent the best sequence in their 117 years. Suddenly, the moneybags of Newcastle and Middlesbrough are not having things all their own way in the North-East.

Like Kevin Keegan, Reid had to beat the drop into the third grade before becoming upwardly mobile. The similarity ends there. Sunderland having spent comparative petty cash on new recruits. And, like Bryan Rob-

son, he has a new ground on the horizon. The snappily titled Monkwearmouth stadium, which will eventually cost £40,000, opens in August next year. Whether Sunderland are back in the First by then, as the cynical world beyond Wearside seems to expect, depends largely on the sum at Reid's disposal and how he uses it. The chief executive, John Fickling, promises "more money than any manager in our history". The talk locally is of £10m.

As Reid awaits the profits of

boom, Barry Fry, manager of Roker's latest victims, Birmingham, talks issue with the prophets of doom. "Sunderland were too good for us, too strong, too aggressive and too clever. They're solid at the back, creative and mobile all over the park and believe they're going to win. When they're not in possession, they get behind the ball. When they win, they bomb forward."

"They're champions by a mile and they'll consolidate their position in the Premiership

even without Reidy adding to the squad."

That may be daydream believing, to quote the Monkees song that has bizarrely become a Roker anthem, but the champions-elect are brimming with ability. Paul Bracewell is the manager's eyes and ears on the pitch; Michael Gray hit an awesome long-range goal against Birmingham in front of the Fulwell End on which he used to stand; and Paul Stewart is at last recognisable as the striker who twice fetched £2m.

though he is now suspended.

Today, while Reid joins a rare all-ticket crowd at Darlington for the Third Division promotion battle against one of his former employers, Barry Fry goes from the frying pan to the fire that is the Baseball Ground. Derby, who receive Palace in a crunch match next weekend, should edge closer to the second automatic promotion place at the expense of Birmingham, who last won away six months ago.

The pre-season favourites, Wolves, lie 18th yet safe, but Palace cannot expect to encounter end-of-season languor as they seek a first League win at Molineux since their first visit in 1921. Mark McGhee has warned his squad that they are playing to avoid his summer purge, while the fact that Wolves' last four fixtures are all against clubs in the thick of the play-off and relegation issues should concentrate minds.

In the Second Division's match of the season, Swindon will become champions if they triumph at Blackpool, the only team who can still catch them. A draw would be enough to secure the Wiltshire side's elevation - and a change of status for the fifth year running - in Steve McMahon's first full campaign as player-manager.

McMahon was on Manchester City's books during Reid's reign - which, in retrospect, increasingly resembles a golden age at Maine Road.

Team news

Norwich v West Brom
Winger O'Neill is Norwich's only absentee while Johnson could come in for a first appearance in two months. West Bromwich manager Buckley is likely to name an unchanged side.

Port Vale v Tranmere
Manager Rudge plans to give some of Port Vale's youngsters a run-out, with Talbot, goalkeeper Van Heusen, Luton, Corden and Eyre set to play. Tranmere defender Rodgers is suspended, so player-manager Aldridge could turn to Morgan.

Portsmouth v Barnsley
Defenders Gittens and Russell and

midfielder Igoe come into contention for Portsmouth, who are without Simpson, Dunn and Thomson. Barnsley have Red-Team suspended and injury worries over Shuttin and Payton. Dutch teenager Ten Heuvel could make his debut.

Reading v Charlton
Player-manager Gooding is set to return in place of Nogan. Sweeper Holsgrove should also be back after a bout of flu. Charlton have Bowyer and Rufus back after suspension. Midfielder Linger is also available after a ban.

Southend v Ipswich
Left back Simson returns after a one-match ban for Southend, who have also included 18-year-old defender Mornan in their squad. Ipswich live without defenders Morbury, Wark, Toranzo, Usherbeck and Vaughan through injuries and suspension. Striker Matthe is back

after two games out while midfielder Milton is fit again after a groin strain.

Wolves v Crystal Palace
Midfielder Atkins is set to return for Wolves but they are likely to be without injured midfielder Osborn while Smith and Ferguson are suspended. Midfielder Fletcher returns for Palace but they are without Houghton. Ndahi is fit again after injury, but Dyer is expected to retain his midfield place.

TOMORROW
Sunderland v Stoke
Striker Stewart serves a one-match ban as the leaders seek the one point needed to guarantee a Premiership place next season. He will be replaced by Howey. Stoke will sack by White rather than risk Cranshaw but Dwyer could come in for Potter in defence.

Title in sight for Rangers

Scottish football

Rangers could seal another Premier Division title this afternoon if they beat Motherwell, which is likely, and Celtic lose at home to Falkirk, which is unlikely.

Walter Smith returns to the scene of his first-ever defeat as Rangers manager, knowing victory at Motherwell will help him complete a happy fifth anniversary in charge.

The Rangers manager was in

Italy earlier this week with chairman David Murray, having talks with the Juventus striker Gianluca Vialli, as the Scottish champions look to seal a remarkable summer signing.

However, today the Vialli talk goes on ice as Rangers pursue three of the six remaining points that will ensure an eighth successive domestic title.

Meanwhile, a win for Celtic would not only keep the championship race alive, but it would condemn Falkirk to certain relegation.

Derby v Birmingham
Trotter is set to start a league game for the first time since October because Daryl Powell has an injured hamstring. Van der Luyn turned an ankle in training and Flynn and Sturridge are suspended. Ward and Williams also come into consideration. The Birmingham striker Pascosello and midfielder Hunt are poised to return to the starting line-up.

Grimsby v Sheffield United
Livingstone could get the nod ahead of Woods to partner former Sheffield United man Mendonca in the Grimsby attack. Sheffield United have an injury worry over Nielsen, although striker Taylor is set to return.

Leicester v Huddersfield
Defender Walsh is back after a one-match ban but striker Roberts is still sidelined

with a rib injury. Huddersfield midfielder Doolock and Ward have recovered from chest infections.

Luton v Watford
Luton welcome back captain Davis but striker Grant is struggling with an ankle ligament injury, with Iominson and Taylor standing by if he fails a fitness test. Watford have four central defenders ruled out so trainees Ward and Rooney are called up.

Millwall v Oldham
Manager Nichol, who last played a league match in March 1995, could be a Millwall substitute. They are missing defenders Stevens, Thatcher, Lavin and Van Berk and striker Dolby through bans while Kulikov, Webster and Fuchs are injured. Oldham have to play goalkeeper Hall-worth because potential replacements have worse injuries.

TODAY'S NUMBER

6

The number of runners who will attempt to complete tomorrow's 26-mile London Marathon wearing full rhino costumes, which each weigh 22lbs. Two of the Save the Rhinos runners aim to finish in four hours.

Young and old on trial for England

Derek Pringle on a match packed with cricketers who have plenty to prove to the watching selectors at Chelmsford

It might not quite be the quorum needed to select an England team, but at least Raymond Illingworth will make an early acquaintance with two of his most recently elected selectors at Chelmsford today, where England A, who performed so well last winter in Pakistan, begin a four-day match against the Rest: a team captained by Jack Russell and culled mainly from England players, with one or two young county hopefuls in its ranks.

The match – the first curtain raiser of the season proper, despite the traditional yet low key goings on at Old Trafford – is the latest incarnation of the old MCC versus Champion county of yore. A fixture thought to have lost its public appeal, hence the change. Who said that English cricket is totally devoid of progressive ideas?

The match echoes the old Test trials, which ended in 1976 apparently due to, among other things, the players not taking them seriously enough. During one match, John Snow apparently alternated bowling overs of off-breaks with overs of bouncers to Geoff Boycott.

However, following another dismal winter, only a handful of England players can be certain of selection for the first Test and effort, unlike the April weather, is the one thing that should virtually be guaranteed.

It is a point made by Nasser Hussain, England A's captain and one of several players likely to be pushing hard for a place this summer. "I'm really looking forward to it," he said yesterday. "With all but one of the selectors there, it is a great chance to stake an early claim, whoever you are."

Unfortunately one player who will not be doing so is Dean Headley, who has been forced to withdraw with an injured hip. Headley was undoubtedly the A team's find of the winter, after taking 17 wickets in three "Tests" against Pakistan. No replacement is being called into the squad and Hussain will probably be allowed one of the Rest's three left-arm seamers in

an attempt to balance his side. Of these, Mark Ilett is the best known but the most injury prone, while Jason Lewry topped last season's bowling averages at Sussex.

More mysterious still – until it was discovered that Ray Illingworth had picked both sides – is Paul Hutterston, an 18-year-old graduate of Yorkshire's Cricket Academy, who has played just a handful of games for the Yorkshire second team.

With the pitch firm and tinged with green, all the selectors, which include Tim Munton and Ed Gidkins for the A team and Glenn Chapple for the Rest, are likely to be employed, presumably at the expense of one of the four spinners, none of whom had outstanding winters.

Competition between the batsmen will be even more intense. Of those on display, only Graham Thorpe can be certain of being picked for the first Test, while Nick Knight and Jason Pooley will want to show Lancashire's John Crawley and Jason Gallian that they can be equally adept at catching the selectorial gaze.

In the past, England have often been criticised for continuing to pick players past their sell-by date and Martyn Moxon, soon to be 36, is clearly a surprise choice. Not so his county team-mate, Tony McGrath, who replaced Moxon as Yorkshire's opener when the latter broke his thumb.

After a successful winter in Pakistan, it will be the extent of the younger man's desire to eclipse Moxon during four days that will serve as an indicator as to whether or not English cricket is ready to move forward.

ENGLAND A: N V Knight (Warwickshire), A Mitchell (Yorkshire), M Hussain (Essex), D P O'Connell (Warwickshire), J C Pooley (Middlesex), R C East (Essex), K Piger (Northamptonshire), D R K Bailey (Essex), R D Benge (Yorkshire), T A Munton (Yorkshire), S H H Goldie (Sussex).

THE REST: M D Minton (Yorkshire), J E R Gail (Lancashire), J P Crawley (Lancashire), G P Thomas (Sussex), M R Bannister (Essex), R J Russell (Gloucestershire), M E Moxon (Lancashire), R K Moxon (Lancashire), J C Best (Essex), G Chapple (Lancashire), J D Lewry (Sussex), P M Hutterston (Yorkshire).



Front-on view: Darren Gough bowls at Old Trafford yesterday. Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

Elworthy shows early all-round promise

MIKE CAREY

reports from Old Trafford
Lancashire 212
Yorkshire 64-3

They were no doubt wondering in Lancashire – and further afield for that matter – how Wasim Akram would be replaced this summer. Steve Elworthy, the South African all-rounder hired for that unenviable task, offered a few hints here yesterday.

Appearing when Lancashire were 67 for 6 and, with the ball still seaming about, he rode his early luck, dropped anchor and when he was last out at 212 had made a career-best 88 with no little flourish.

To complete the Wasim picture, Elworthy should ideally have then gone on to break a finger or two, maybe have a brush with an umpire and finish with something like 7 for 40; but that was never in the script, not at his pace on a pitch made easier by benevolent sunshine.

Instead, with half an eye on the testing days to come, he was content to bowl 11 overs well within himself, concentrating on length and line but, bringing the ball down from well above off, still able to reveal an accurate bouncer which, sparingly used, could be a potent weapon.

As a batsman, Elworthy no doubt found his Lancashire League experience useful in coping with the moving ball. Equally important, though, was his ability to play straight and his self-discipline, qualities

which eluded many of his colleagues and gave Yorkshire regular rewards for a spirited bowling and fielding display.

Later, as batting became more straightforward and some of Yorkshire's inexperience betrayed itself, Elworthy produced exotic strokes off front and back foot, reaching his half-century with a hook for six. A century seemed there for the taking when he under-clubbed an off-break to be caught on the boundary, but he had more than made his point.

Test starts with a bang

TONY COZIER

reports from Bridgetown, Barbados

There was a bizarre beginning to the first Test here yesterday. It featured the loss of three New Zealand wickets within the first 40 minutes for only six runs, a bold counter-attack, two dubious decisions by one of the game's most respected umpires and a sensational introduction to Test cricket for the newest West Indian fast bowler.

Predictably sent in by the new West Indies captain, Courtney Walsh, New Zealand lost their first wicket when the tall Jamaican Steve Bucknor, umpire in two World Cup finals and not known for errors, ruled Craig Spearman caught behind off Curtly Ambrose when even the slips barely whispered unconvincing appeals.

At the opposite end Walsh accounted for the two left-handers Roger Twose, taken at third slip, and Stephen Fleming, held around the corner, in successive overs.

Nathan Astle and Adam Parore then mounted a courageous recovery. Astle provided the aggression, Parore the common sense as he put on 81 for the fourth wicket.

They had to deal with some fast but wayward bowling from Patterson Thompson, the big Barbadian making his debut before an excited crowd of his countrymen.

Clearly overcome by nerves, he could scarcely place his front foot behind the crease and conceded six no balls in his first two overs that yielded 25. He was taken out of the attack to be recalled later, immediately striking twice in his first over.

He produced his best delivery to have Astle caught by the keeper for 54 which included 10

four from 52 balls and then accounted for the left-handed Chris Harris to what television replays, and Harris himself, indicated was another misjudgement on Bucknor's part. The lifter that Brian Lara took over his head at first slip was shown to have been deflected from forearm guard, another misfortune for the unfortunate Kiwis.

The success simply made Thompson's adrenaline pump even faster and he continued to concede no ball after no ball, 17 in all in his first eight overs. He is fast, no doubt about that, but also wild.

Without Nottinghamshire's all-rounder Chris Cairns, who flies back to England today for treatment on the side strain that has ruled him out of the two Tests, New Zealand found themselves short of quality batting. But Parore, now concentrating on his batting after leaving the keeping to the new captain, Lee Germon, played with resolution and ideal technique. As New Zealand moved to 137 for five 40 minutes after lunch he was holding the innings together with 47.

Gary Kirsten lead South Africa to victory in the Sharjah Cup final against India by 38 runs yesterday. Kirsten's unbeaten 115 took his side 287 for 5 in their 50 overs.

The opener put on 95 from 91 balls for the third wicket with Pat Symcox, whose 61 off just 49 balls, included five fours and two sixes.

Brian McMillan hit three sixes off consecutive balls from Venkatapathy Raju to end the innings with a flourish.

Vikram Rathore and Sachin Tendulkar put on 59 for the first wicket but, when Rathore edged Craig Matthews to Dave Richardson, four run-outs blew the Indian chase to pieces.

Glamorgan took their century tally to four in their match against Cambridge University, which petered out into a draw at Fenner's after the morning's play was lost to drizzle.

The Glamorgan captain, Matthew Maynard, hit exactly 100 before retiring because of his troublesome back strain. Maynard, 66 overnight, hit a six and 12 fours in a 92-ball century.

Steve James followed his captain in reaching an unbeaten 102 against his old university, hitting eight fours in 136 balls.

Norman enjoying public reaction

GOLF

GEORGE JULIAN
reports from Hilton Head

Greg Norman was bowed but not broken, as he proved by moving into contention for the MCI Classic here in South Carolina yesterday.

Norman knows that last Sunday's stunning defeat by Nick Faldo in the Masters will never be forgotten but the memory of messages of overwhelming sympathy will remain with him for the rest of his life.

"This has been the most touching few days of my entire career – my entire life," said Norman, after posting a 69 for a four-under-par 138. He added: "I can honestly tell you that it has changed my total outlook on life and people. I've admitted in the past how cynical I have become but there is no need for me to be cynical any more."

The goodwill messages are currently running at four times the entire total he received after winning the Open Championship at Royal St George's in 1993. Norman said: "I never thought I could reach out and touch people like that."

His extraordinary how I touched people by losing. It is amazing that something so bad can become so good, but it really has. It has changed my life. I have become a different and better person since seven o'clock last Sunday night."

His wife Laura told him: "You know, maybe this is better than winning a green jacket. Maybe now you understand the importance of it all." Norman added: "It's almost as though, like Laura said, I've won something even though I lost a Masters. I now have a lot of things I'll be able to cherish."

Scotland's Colin Montgomerie was cherishing hopes of a first win in America after a 66, laden with six birdies, swept him to within one stroke of the half-way target set by Jeff Sluman (67) and Tom Watson (67). Faldo was among the late starters and he was looking for an improvement after beginning with a one-under-par 70.

THE CLASSIC (Hilton Head Island, South Carolina) Early leading first-round scores (US men's standard: 72) N. Norman, 69; B. Faldo, 70; J. Sluman, 71; T. Watson, 72; M. Maynard, 73; S. James, 74; G. Norman, 75; J. Gail, 76; J. Pooley, 77; R. East, 78; K. Piger, 79; D. Benge, 80; T. A. Munton, 81; S. H. H. Goldie, 82; P. M. Hutterston, 83; J. D. Lewry, 84; R. K. Moxon, 85; G. Chapple, 86; J. C. Best, 87; M. E. Moxon, 88; J. P. Crawley, 89; M. R. Bannister, 90; R. J. Russell, 91; A. Mitchell, 92; N. V. Knight, 93; D. P. O'Connell, 94; J. C. Pooley, 95; R. C. East, 96; K. Piger, 97; D. Benge, 98; T. A. Munton, 99; S. H. H. Goldie, 100; P. M. Hutterston, 101; J. D. Lewry, 102; R. K. Moxon, 103; G. Chapple, 104; J. C. Best, 105; M. E. Moxon, 106; J. P. Crawley, 107; M. R. Bannister, 108; R. J. Russell, 109; A. Mitchell, 110; N. V. Knight, 111; D. P. O'Connell, 112; J. C. Pooley, 113; R. C. East, 114; K. Piger, 115; D. Benge, 116; T. A. Munton, 117; S. H. H. Goldie, 118; P. M. 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SPORT

'IT'S ALMOST AS GOOD AS SCORING'

Glenn Moore on the remaking of Stan Collymore

page 26

Referee 'responsible for injury'

Rugby Union
DAVID LLEWELLYN

British sport is examining the implications of a landmark High Court decision in which a young rugby player was awarded damages against a match referee.

The ramifications of the court ruling are huge. Mr Justice Curtis's decision that referee Michael Nolan should be held responsible for the collapse of a scrum in a junior match four years ago which led to Ben Smolton, then 17, being paralysed for life, could touch most areas of sport from the highest level downwards.

Edward Grayson a barrister

and president of the British Association for Sport and the Law, said yesterday that the legal floodgates could open: "Refereeing a physical contact sport becomes a risky activity. It means that referees have got to observe the laws of the game meticulously and keep strict control, because they could be challenged in court."

"The principles are being established and the parameters laid down. If referees obey the laws of a particular game well then there is no problem."

"But what it does mean is that lunatics, who think playing games is a no-man's land and a licence to commit reckless and intimidatory or deliberate foul play is now well and truly squashed. It's

about time this type of guideline from the High Court came in."

Brian Campsall, one of the top referees in England, tried to sound an immediate note of calm. "This decision does not alarm me," Campsall said. "I don't feel more vulnerable as a result, but I can understand other, less confident people being a little bit worried."

Campsall did admit to one particular concern though. "The problem is at lower levels where the inexperienced referee has no touch judges, and he is likely to get inexperienced players packing down against experienced ones. And I think any test case like this where somebody is held responsible then it is going to put people off. They will not

want to put themselves in situations where they are going to be taken to court for doing something they enjoy in a game they love."

Some of his fears were borne out by Simon Taylor, an Oxford Blue who, at 28, has taken up refereeing. Taylor, who is also a solicitor with Withers in the City of London, said last night: "I am in my first season of refereeing and I take charge of junior games, clubs' Fourth XVs and so on and occasionally I see a disparity in age and experience in the front rows. This has made me think, although I will carry on refereeing."

One particularly vulnerable area will be school sport – the chemistry master taking up the

whistle to help out may be a thing of the past. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers said: "It will certainly drive out the enthusiastic amateur. The only people who should be taking school sports are qualified PE teachers."

The Rugby Football Union said that since the appointment of a national referee development officer in 1993 "programmes have been designed and promulgated based upon the principles of refereeing safely, with the care of every player in mind, and within the Laws of the game."

Robert Horner, the chairman of the RFU's referees

committee and a solicitor, said: "The thing that concerns me about the judgment is it doesn't seem to take account of the experience of a referee, and although we can give them any amount of training off the field, it is actually the skills of management which can be given only by experience, which enables a referee to exert the ultimate controls."

Other sports were also examining the ruling to assess its implications. Rugby league has done away with rucks and mauls and the scrum is simply used as a way of restarting the game, without the intense physical pressures of union. The notorious "spear" tackle could land a referee in trouble if he had

allowed one to be made and then the same player repeated the offence, causing serious injury, but in the main experts see little problem for league referees.

Football Association spokesman, Steve Double, was confident that in his sport referees would not be seriously affected by the decision. He said: "We find it difficult to see a similar situation arising in football. Physical contact is part and parcel of rugby." And Double quoted Law Five, Clause 13 of the Rules of Association Football. "The referee shall not be held liable for any kind of injury suffered by a player, official or spectator – which may be due to any decision which he takes in terms of the laws of the game."

BAF policy under fire from angry Bedford

Athletics
MIKE ROWBOTTOM

A major split in Britain's distance running policy opened yesterday as Alan Warner, chairman of the British Athletic Federation's road running commission, came under fierce personal attack from David Bedford, head of marketing for tomorrow's London Marathon.

Bedford criticised Warner for failing to turn up to an event in which a number of Britain's leading male marathon runners were seeking the remaining Olympic place following the pre-selection of Richard Nerurkar and Peter Whitehead. Warner, who attended Monday's Boston marathon in his

longstanding position as a paid consultant to the sponsors, John Hancock, faxed the London organisers this week to say that he would not be attending tomorrow's race as he was on holiday.

"He's gone on holiday, and I have to say I think that is a disgrace," said Bedford, who questioned the British selectors' supposition that no runner who competed in a spring marathon could do themselves justice in Atlanta.

"Talking to Alan Warner is a waste of time," he said. "It's like coming up against a brick wall. He doesn't want to know. He doesn't want to listen."

Five of Britain's leading contenders tomorrow – Paul Evans, Eamonn Martin, Gary Staines, Jon Solly and Paul Hudspeth – agreed the selection policy was

wrong, and that London should be the designated official trial race for future events. If all run according to their potential, the selectors could be embarrassed by Sunday lunchtime.

There was general acceptance of the fact that Whitehead had been picked, as he had fulfilled the laid-down criterion of finishing in the first five places in last year's world championships, but the decision to extend a place to Nerurkar, who was seventh, was criticised.

Both athletes have recovered from injury in recent months, although Nerurkar signalled his fitness last week with a personal best half-marathon of 61min 05sec in Paris.

Rousseau's philosophy, Marathon preview, page 22

Seaman set to stay on his 'refresher' course



The England goalkeeper David Seaman (above) will continue to look like a "tube of Refreshers" for the next two years, despite the admission by a top Football Association official that the garish kit design had been a "clanger" and should be changed.

Trevor Phillips, the FA's commercial director, said the red, green and orange shirt which Seaman first sported in the 1-0 win over Bulgaria at Wembley

last month had been a blunder. But he was then forced to backtrack when the manufacturers, Umbro, voiced some colourful comments of their own.

Phillips called the design "a clanger," adding that "the net result is that David Seaman has to walk out on to the Wembley pitch looking like a tube of Refreshers. You can only apologise, hold your hands up to it and put it right as soon as you can."

Umbro's umbrage resulted in an embarrassed Phillips putting out a statement which read: "Further to my remarks earlier today, I can confirm that the England away goalkeeping kit will not be changing and will be worn for the next two years."

Seaman, who was preparing with England for Wednesday's game with Croatia, refused to comment further.

Photograph: Gary Prior/Allsport

FA to review ticket prices

Football
GLENN MOORE

The Football Association is likely to cut admission prices for both England internationals and FA Cup semi-finals next season. The move follows the public outcry over the high rates charged for this season's games.

A senior FA source said there would be a thorough review of prices during the summer, with a reduction in many seating areas being the probable outcome. There are also likely to be a range of other initiatives aimed at increasing international attendances.

However, in an almost vindictive act by the Match and Grounds Committee, there will be no reduction for England's final warm-up game before the European Championships. The FA hopes the Saturday afternoon kick-off will ensure a good attendance despite the unattractive nature of the opponents on 18 May – a poor Hungarian side.

There is a far more daunting task for England on Wednesday when they meet Croatia. Training began at Bisham Abbey yesterday and must have gone well because, afterwards, Terry Venables made the rare mistake of allowing himself to be drawn into saying something controversial.

It has been said of the England coach that if his team blocked attackers as well as he defends leading questions. David Seaman could bring a deckchair to games instead of

wearing one but, yesterday, his concentration slipped. Pressed, once again, on the subject of his successor Venables said: "It's a good job I didn't wait until after Euro 96 [to resign]. If they had taken the same amount of time, we would have played several [World Cup qualifiers] already."

As pens scribbled, the FA was forced to amount a damage limitation exercise. "The process is progressing, not stagnating," a spokesman said. Glenn

Hodde is the current favourite but, with the domestic season entering its crucial phase, it is ludicrous to expect an announcement at the moment.

Only Peter Beardsley, who had a sore leg, and Paul Ince, who is still in Italy, failed to train. Ince, who will join the party after playing for Internazionale this weekend, said from Milan he is likely to stay there next season. "The last three months would be fantastic," he said. "It would be silly for me to pack my bags and go back to England, or have to prove myself again in another country. They love me here. I am like the black Cantona."

The news will disappoint Arsenal, who have been pursuing Ince all season, but please Venables who has seen his Ince broaden his game in Serie A.

There was further good news for Venables from across the Alps in Geneva, where Uefa agreed to allow 22-man squads, with three goalkeepers, for Euro 96. The decision is a victory for Venables, who has led the campaign for an increase from 20,

Jordi Cruyff has been named in the Dutch squad for next Wednesday's friendly against Germany in Rotterdam, apparently ending doubts over whether the 22-year-old son of Johan, who plays for Barcelona and holds a Spanish passport, would play for the Netherlands or Spain.

The young striker is expected to make his debut in next week's warm-up for the European Championship, 30 years

after his father's first game in the orange jersey. His chances of being named in Wednesday's starting line-up have been increased by the injury to Ajax's Patrick Kluivert. He was called up ahead of Celtic's Pierre van Hooijdonk, who suffered an earlier disappointment when his fellow professionals in Scotland left him off the short-list for their play-off of the year award.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

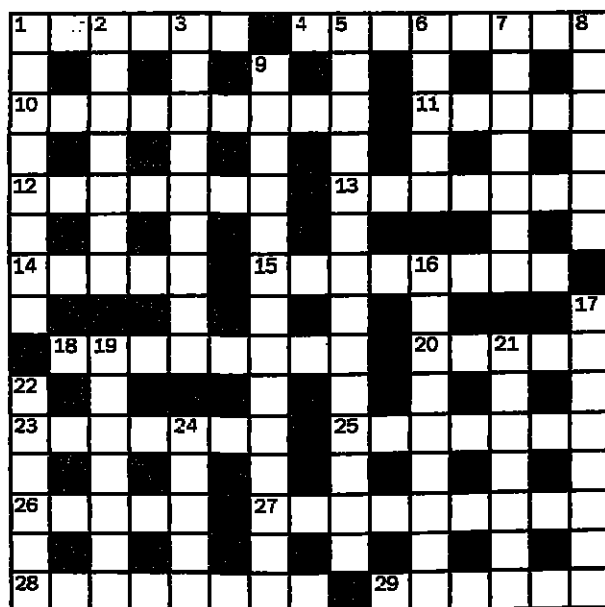
Quoi?

Ask the Franklin Bookman French Professor.

No. 2960, Saturday 20 April

By Phi

Friday's Solution



1 Across
2 Down
3 Across
4 Down
5 Across
6 Down
7 Across
8 Down
9 Across
10 Down
11 Across
12 Down
13 Across
14 Down
15 Across
16 Down
17 Across
18 Down
19 Across
20 Down
21 Across
22 Down
23 Across
24 Down
25 Across
26 Down
27 Across
28 Down
29 Across

1 England by itself mostly accepts British Independent (6)
2 Marine creatures – one frequently brought back among booty (8)
3 Bird acts with style (9)
4 It alerts many a businessman about a space in diary, perhaps? Quite the reverse (5)
5 It is inquisitive, mostly, about atmosphere – that's plain! (7)
6 Peace, as will absorb the French (7)
7 Plane crash – sounded alarm after first sign of plane (5)
8 English drop-out sent abroad, not allowed to have fixed place (8)
9 Welsh town where everyone's backing girl and I (8)
10 Source of flame left stuck into food (5)

11 I saw Roman accepting Roman quinter by a student Italian composer (7)
12 Window filling garret with a bit of light and energy? On the contrary (7)
13 Young soldier attracting notice in church beside front of tomb (5)
14 Against bid from rival (9)
15 Musical work author turned in as well gets me twisting (4,4)
16 Goddess, one followed by English (6)
17 A suggestion embraced by no religious renegade (8)
18 Pub to exclude a woman (7)
19 Hormone information obtained after dissection of most of rooster (9)

1 Possibly locate it under "RLS" – a sea novel? (8,6)
2 Drunkenly stagger, containing power to act as turn-off? (5)
3 Naive girl implying uranium's used in running engine (7)
4 Set Herma, initially, before Shakespearean forest (6)
5 Take a long trip on the Tube to restore status quo? (4,4,6)
6 Not in the way of a private garage? (3-6)
7 Run through one's lines? About to try going on stage, forgetting last words (8)
8 Looking worn from upsurge in horrible noise (5-2)
9 Operatic heroine to finish up following operatic song (7)
10 A source of animal treatment accepting care of upset bird (6)
11 What gives Tel some relaxation? (3-2)

THE FRANKLIN SCRAMBLE

Make the longest word you can from MENCITTEP Friday's Scramble: MARGAL.

Win a Franklin Bookman Dictionary and Thesaurus worth £100

The first correct solution to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday win a Franklin Bookman Dictionary and Thesaurus worth £100. Answers and the winner's name will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode.



Haynes stands by the West Indian, Phillips, playing positively and enjoying your cricket, neither of which attitudes had been in evidence when he was over. "What I'm mainly trying to do is create a better atmosphere than the last season," Haynes said. "My understanding wasn't very good."

There was a far from bickering, and not togetherness. I want to create more of a festive atmosphere. For example, I'm making the guys remember another's birthday, wedding anniversaries.

We're having a few dinners together, showing we care for each other. In tomorrow's (today's) edition on Sunday Simon Gray talks to the legendary West Indies cricketer, Desmond Haynes about the challenges of his role as new coach of Sussex.

Phases: A coach jumps around the countryside, guide to the men shape England's future.

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